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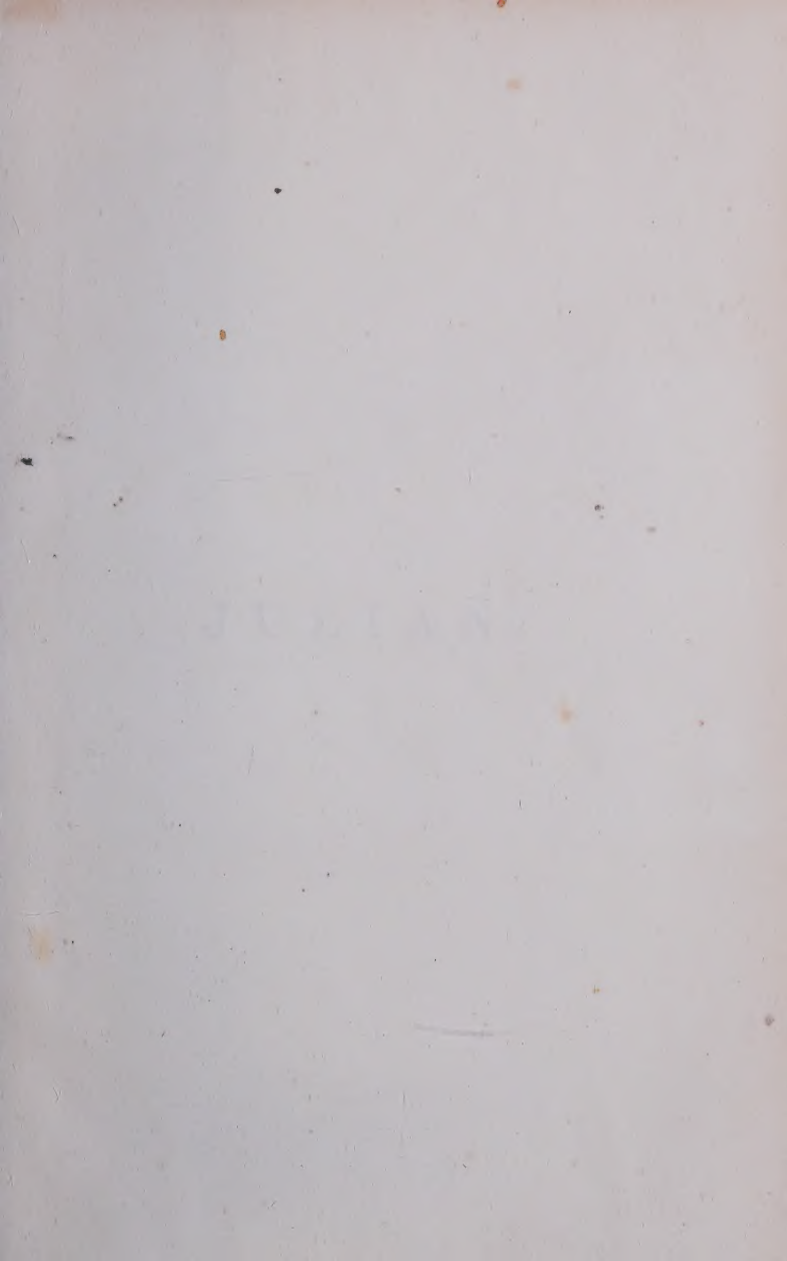
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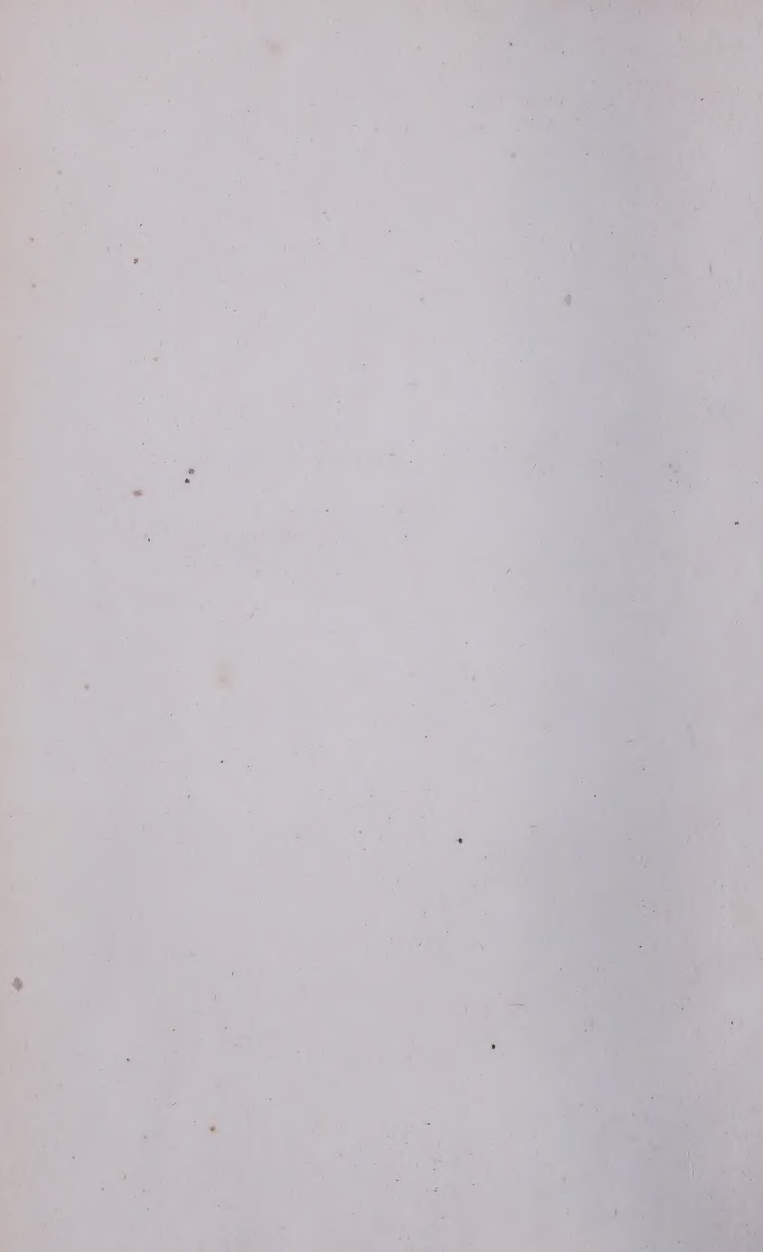
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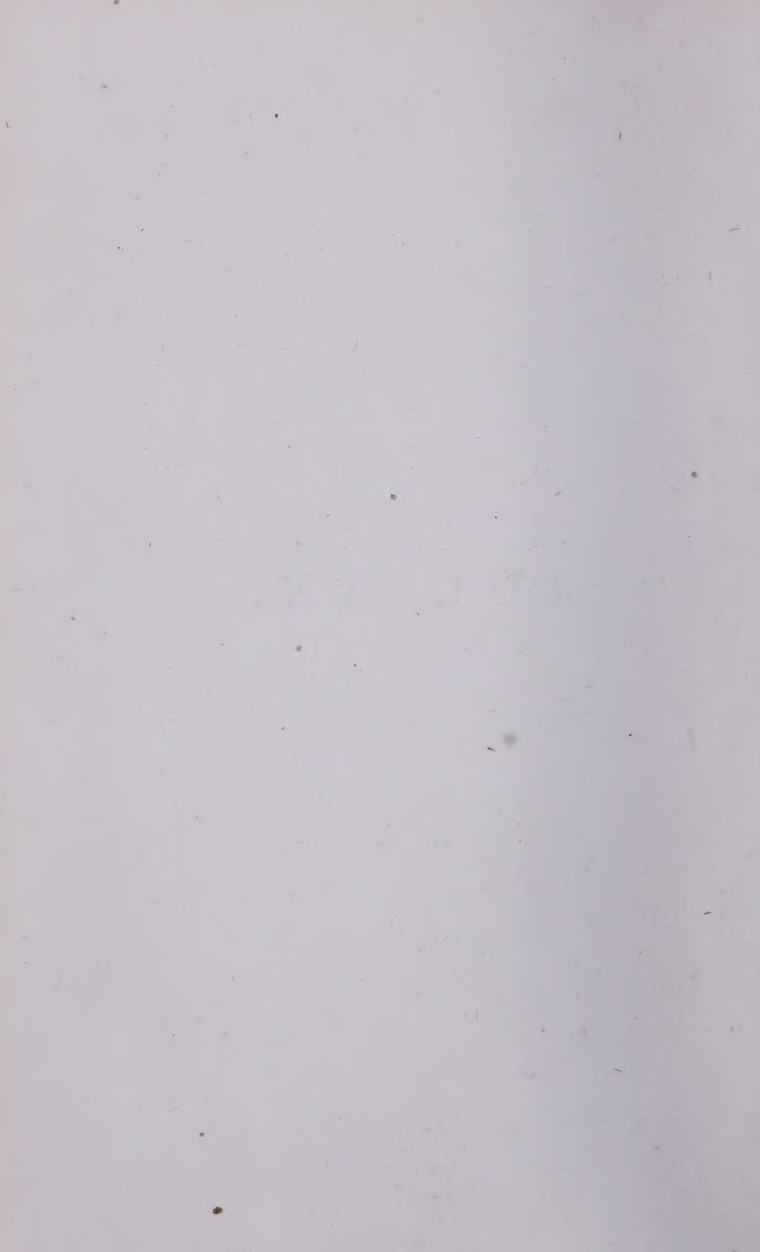






JULIAN.





# JULIAN;

OR,

## SCENES IN JUDEA.

BY

WILLIAM WARE,

AUTHOR OF "ZENOBIA," "AURELIAN," ETC.

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# JULIAN.

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## XIII.

WAKENED from dreams in which I was losing myself, I saw that the reproof of the camel-driver was needed. We accordingly returned towards the path we had left, and moved on in the direction of the city.

The whole prospect to the east was now open to us, as we crossed a part of the promontory of which I have spoken. Machærus, the Fortress, stood before us crowning its inaccessible heights with tower and wall; the city, with which it is connected by fortified passages, stretching down the hill as it slopes gently to the north, and spreading out on each side, beyond its embattlements, into suburbs which spoke of both numbers and wealth. The prospect was wild and magnificent. The precipitous heights with trees and shrubs depending from the fissures in which they had fixed their roots, water from secret springs gushing forth and falling from rock to rock till it was lost in unfathomable gulphs below, all crowned with the stately buildings of the city in every form of Greek and Roman art, the Fortress at the southern limit towering above the whole, and bidding

defiance through its natural defences to the most proved resources of war, presented in their union a scene like no other which I had beheld before in either Europe or Asia. The beauty seemed to me, the greater also, for the features of dreary desolation, that were so many and so appalling in almost every other direction.

In the city above, and among the clefts of the rocks on which it stands, could the eye, pained as it had been by the barrenness of the desert and the shores and surface of the Salt Sea, now rest with an agreeable sense of relief, upon the dark hues and heavy masses of this eastern foliage. Over the walls were to be seen the palm, the poplar, the sycamore, and the broad terebinth, shooting up and mingling their forms with those of the columns and pinnacles of Herod's temples and palaces. All, that from such distance could be descried, gave signs of a population not insensible to any of the provisions by which life is adorned, at least, if not furnished with additional means of happiness—and we pressed on our way, anxious ere the sun should leave to pass the gates, and see more and from a nearer point of view of what filled us so with admiration.

As we went still farther to the north on our way towards the gate of the city, we fell in with many travellers taking the same road, and passed the scattered dwellings of those who, as gardeners and husbandmen, supplied the wants of the citizens. A rich soil began to show itself, from which the last products of the harvest were gathering. When we approached the gates, as our view was unobstructed to the east, and in the direction of Herodium, we beheld, as far as the eye could reach, valleys still smiling in a rich luxuriance of vegetation,

sprinkled with villages and the insulated dwellings of the peasantry. Upon passing within the walls, we found the city of less extent than it had seemed when seen from the borders of the sea, but at the same time remarkable for the elegance and costliness of its structures, especially its public ones. For Herod the Great having rebuilt Machærus, he obeyed here, as he did wherever he undertook any work for the people, and for which their taxes were to pay, his passion for magnificence, and accordingly filled it with palaces, markets, temples, and porticos, as his humor inclined. The city in these features of it seems far beyond the demands of the region and of the inhabitants. These are of many nations; —Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Arabians, as well as Jews and Samaritans, being found here, either as permanent citizens, or as strangers resorting hither for purposes of traffic.

We soon found our way to the merchant's house, to whom Onias had commended me, who gave me a hospitable welcome to the city of Herod. Upon inquiring after the Tetrarch, and in what way access was to be obtained, and whether he were at present in Machærus, I learned that he was now dwelling in the palace within the Fortress, that he was easy of approach, and moreover was with impatience awaiting my arrival, of which Onias had given him warning.

When I had been refreshed by the sleep of a long night, and had satisfied my love of what is new and strange by examining different parts of the lower city, I turned towards the citadel, within which stands the palace of Herod. Although there are in the lower city other palaces, costly and sumptuous, which he also oc-



cupies when his inclinations prompt,—yet for the most part, as I have learned, he confines himself to this within the Fortress. This place is reached only at one point, and by one passage, which is a bridge,—covered by an arch, and more like a subterranean tunnel than a bridge,—thrown across a deep gulf, that separates one part of this mountain from another. On the smaller part stands the Fortress of Machærus, entered in the way I have described. On every other side it is wholly inaccessible; since the precipices which nature has reared are impossible of ascent, and superadded to them are the lofty walls and towers, a hundred cubits and more in height, rebuilt by the great Herod, when they had been demolished by the Romans in their conflict with Aristobulus. Only it must be said, that the structures of Herod are greatly inferior, in both extent and strength, to those that had before been built by our king Alexander.

When I had passed the huge gateways at either extremity of the bridge, both of which were guarded by soldiers, I entered the space enclosed by the walls of the Citadel, in the centre of which rose before me the palace of the Tetrarch, magnificent in its vastness, and beautiful by reason of the multitude of its polished columns, its lofty porticos, and the richness of its various decorations. Before it, and surrounding it on all sides, were groves of every fruit tree and flowering plant, brought from all parts of the world. No tree could, I believe, be named, in any way remarkable, distinguished either for its beauty of form, or the flavor of its fruit, or the odor of its blossoms, that might not be found here. In all directions also, fountains of water were throwing up to a great height their refreshing showers or columns.

Long ranges of other buildings, designed for the chief officers of the king, for all such as chose to resort to his court, as well as for the great garrison which is always maintained here, were seen in different parts of this large enclosure, seeming almost, for extent, like those I had left on the other side of the bridge. The scene was made to appear full of life also, from the movement of troops of soldiers on the walls or the platforms beneath, to the sound of their warlike instruments, and from the numbers of those who appeared to be visitors of the king, and who were walking among the trees, or reposing by the side of the fountains. A busy multitude also of slaves were laboring at their different employments, in preserving in their order the grounds and the buildings, or performing the errands committed to them.

I was led to that part of the Palace, where were situated the private apartments of the Tetrarch, to the room in which he receives those with whom he has any affairs to transact that are to be conducted with privacy. Herod was sitting with writing materials before him as I entered. In his appearance he conformed to what I had looked for. He was not above the middle stature, nor in other respects possessed of any of those remarkable qualities by which the eye is either captivated or awed at once. His countenance easily relaxed into a smile; yet in the smile there is more of a certain sort of derision, or secret contempt, than of anything like mirthfulness, or goodwill. His eyes are those of a Jew, quick in their motion, and suddenly, and without apparent cause, averted from you as you meet their glance; his beard and hair of a reddish hue, not long, but thick and straight. His garments, of the richest

stuffs, were such as become a monarch. His voice is for the most part soft and cheerful; yet often, and unconsciously as it were, sliding into other tones harsh and imperious, as if they were those most natural. He rose and saluted me with courtesy, using the Latin tongue, which he speaks with readiness and exactness, but rather as if he had learned it of masters, than by much use among those to whom it is a native speech. He asked after the welfare of Onias and his household, expressing much regard for him, and great reliance upon his judgment and valor. He then spake of my journey and of my arrival, and asked, if I had before visited these regions.

I answered, that I had never until within a short period seen any part of the country of my forefathers, nor until now, the Dead Sea and the city of Machærus. I spoke of the wonders of the place, and of the magnificence of his father to whom it owed its existence.

"Yes," he said, "Herod was a great man. But it had been better for Israel, had he been great as a Jew, rather than as a man and a king. He was a Roman, or a Greek, not a true son of Abraham."

"It was very true," I said, "and it was the more a matter of rejoicing, that his son in that departed from the example of the parent, and was a lover of his own country and people, and their customs, yet without a deadly hatred to others. The people were now in expectation, that through him their ancient greatness might be restored."

"It is my glory," he replied, "to be, and to be called a Jew; a lover of the Law, and an observer of its commands. The people of Galilee and Peræa know me only



as a Jew. If I am ever King of Israel—I shall be King of Israel.”

I said, that I could not doubt that he would be; yet it rested with himself.

“Young man,” said he, “you speak well and boldly. Onias has commended thee to me. But for his word, which is sure as the roots of these hills, I should not talk with thee thus. But I now speak with thee even as I should with him.”

I said, that he might do so with safety. I was now wholly a Jew, and so far desirous of the independence and liberty of my country, that I stood ready and waiting to join any enterprise that promised, through its extent and well-concerted plans, the success that ought to crown it.

“Thy countenance and thy voice give me assurance,” said Herod, “of trust-worthiness. But what set thee about that mad outbreak in Cæsarea? Thy present speech agrees not with that. Pilate was too strong for thee. It would have gone ill with thee, as well as Philip, but for Onias. I should hardly else have seen thee here in Machærus.”

The possibility of such mischance seemed to amuse him. I then related to him minutely how it fell out there, and how it was by an accident alone that I had been involved in the enterprise.

“Ah, now again,” said Herod, “you seem the same person who first spoke. I see what swayed thee, friendship and love, not the sacred passion for thy country, of which the occasion was not worthy. The great God of Israel, the God of Moses and of Abraham, of David and the Maccabees, is to be worshipped and served only in

honorable undertakings, agreeing in their greatness with his majesty."

In saying these words the manner of the king changed, and I could see in him without difficulty one not unworthy to reign over Israel. He rose and continued with energy.

"Unhappy Israel! when shall her sorrows cease, her oppressions end, her tears be wiped away from her eyes! All the nations of the earth have taken their fill in the slaughter of her children, and carrying them away into captivity. The king of Babylon, and the king of Syria, have in turn laid her waste. But as truly as God did bring about a return from the captivity, and a deliverance from the great Antiochus, so surely will he accomplish a greater redemption still, from a greater thralldom, by the hand of the least of his servants. Rome shall yet know that there is a greater than herself; Judea shall yet know that her Redeemer liveth; the multitude of the people shall yet rejoice in her salvation. Unto me, Julian, unto me is committed this office, and to the least iota shall its duties be fulfilled."

"I believe it," I answered; "with all Israel, as one man, at thy back, thou canst not fail. But Israel is divided. How shall she be brought together, in one faith and one submission?"

"That is the work," replied the Tetrarch, "we have to do. Ere one step in action can be taken, the mind and heart of the people must be assailed and converted. Already, Julian, has this been done beyond thy knowledge or belief. Emissaries, secret, and partners as it were of my own bosom, have gone out hence into every corner of the land, learning who were to be trusted, and

to them confiding the purposes we cherish. The Herodians, ever lovers of our house, are with us. They will be divided from Rome whom they now affect, but, as they perceive, in seeming only ; to be more than rewarded for all they may lose, in a future Rome here in Judea. In that new Rome, that new and more glorious kingdom, they shall have free indulgence in the customs they approve. The redeemed Jew shall be bound by no chains of a new slavery. Dost thou understand ?”

I did not understand the glance with which he accompanied those words.

“The Law will then,” I replied, “surely be supreme ; it will be raised to new honor, and a wider dominion ; it will be the everlasting foundation on which we shall stand.”

“Oh, surely, surely,” he answered ; “the Law will be supreme. It is for that we war, for that we dare all, for that we put in jeopardy our lives and our children and our wealth. But—but enough of this for once, young Roman. Let us break away from a theme so grave, and look abroad upon the wonders of a place, as yet so new to thee.”

Thus saying, he directed me to accompany him to other parts of the palace, and of the Fortress, and he would display to me its resources. This I was by no means unwilling to do. So we left the apartment.

After we had surveyed the splendors of the palace—the halls, the banqueting rooms, the chambers, the marble roofs, the carved ceilings of Cedar of Lebanon, the columns and the porticos, we turned to the huge walls of this great prison-house, that by ascending them, and still more the lofty towers that shoot up from them at

regular intervals, we might obtain a prospect of the region round about. We soon, though only after a wearisome ascent, stood on the top of the topmost tower, whence the eye looked abroad as far as it is in the power of the eye to penetrate,—no object coming between it and the utmost verge of the horizon. We looked in silence for a space upon the broad land of Judea lying before us in its luxuriance, yet in its slavery.”

“All that we now see,” cried Herod, pointing to the four quarters of Heaven, “shall yet be mine—by my arm shall Jehovah get the victory, upon me is his spirit and his power poured out, this my soul knoweth, and by me shall be filled the throne of David. Have faith in this, Julian, and thou shalt sit on the right hand of my power when I shall have obtained the Kingdom.”

I said that the reward of having served Israel according to my strength was all that I coveted.

“Nevertheless,” said the Tetrarch, “more shall be added. He that worketh for love shall reap the best reward, the reward that love alone can give; but he shall not lose what cometh of the world’s honor. Let us now descend.”

We then descended; but when we had reached the bottom of the tower, in place of passing out by the door through which we had entered, Herod took a contrary direction, and beckoned me to follow him, and again to descend still farther. So we began to descend lower and lower, until, as it seemed, we must have reached the roots of the mountain, and the fountains of the great springs. But at length we paused, and drawing the bolts of a door we entered a vast hall perfectly finished after the rules of art, lighted, but whence I saw

net, and filled with all the various munitions of war. It was an armory of weapons of every kind known to the arts of modern warfare, all of the most perfect workmanship and arranged, each kind by itself, in the most exact order. I was filled with amazement at such displays of power; but it was increased when from this apartment I was led into another, and still another of equal dimensions, and all in like manner stored with the implements of death, with harness for men, and horses, and elephants. I gave words to the wonder which I could not repress, and asked, "Why is all this and whence?"

"Thanks to the Providence of the Great God of Israel," replied the Tetrarch, "his servant has been led to lay aside from the uses of luxury and a vain show, wherewith to heap together these treasures, richer than stores of gold, and kept against the day of the Lord, that great day, when Israel shall arise and shake off her oppressors. Herod the Great built cities and palaces, and strongholds; Herod Antipas hath filled them with both men and arms. It is not thou seest without a show of right, Julian, that he asks thy confidence and allegiance."

I said that I confessed his greatness.

We then left the armories and again ascended, but only a part of the way, when Herod, by a door opening toward another quarter, entered an apartment lighted by windows pierced through the walls of the rock, and filled with vessels, in which were deposited coin and jewels of immense value. "Here," said my conductor, "dost thou behold the secrets of the power that shall be displayed in Israel. Let but the children of Israel come



up to their tents as of old, when the Philistine was in the land, and there shall not be wanting any other of the instruments of successful warfare. Think not, moreover, that thou hast now seen the whole of Herod's power. At Herodium, at Tiberias, at Sepphoris, are there magazines not less well supplied than these thou hast seen here. We wait but for the day and the hour, which the Lord hath put in his own hand."

We returned to the courts around the Palace. I was there shown the huge reservoirs of water prepared for the subsistence of those who should be besieged, the granaries for the necessary supplies of food, and all the various stores in secret chambers within the body of the outward walls, of missiles of every kind, as well as of the most combustible substances for the annoyance and destruction of the assailants. So that when I had seen all, it seemed to me a place now wholly impregnable; to be subdued only, if at all, by years of patient waiting and watching, until the food within should be consumed, or pestilence do the work of the sword.

When we had ended this survey of a thousand wonders, we reëntered the apartment whence we had departed, where Herod informed me that I was no longer the guest of the merchant, but his own, and that Chuza, the Steward of the household, would conduct me to the part of the palace provided for me.

As I sat within the apartment thus made ready for me, in that part of the palace where the walls of the Fortress sinking with the form of the ground, the eye could freely wander over the whole adjacent country and the streets of the lower city, I could not but marvel at the

strange position in which I found myself, and the course that seemed now plainly to be marked out before me. I could from my windows survey the distant valley of the Jordan and the verdant slopes of Moab, together with the sandy deserts that we had traversed. This desert, said I to myself, and I say it to thee also, my mother, as it is the emblem of what thou hast been so many years, Judea, so these luxuriant valleys, smiling in plenty and in peace, are the type of what thou shalt be. I have found him who, if God withhold not his favor, shall accomplish thy deliverance, and save thee out of the hands of thy enemies.

It is from this watch-tower, my mother, that I write these things, overlooking these objects so full of interest to a lover of his county. Herod loads me with favors. But although I have been here many days, he hath conversed only of such things as have been common to all. The palace is thronged with those, strangers from all countries, as well as his own family and friends, with whom he must divide his hours, and it is chiefly at the table in the sumptuous banqueting room, that I have met him since my first interview. There he has been surrounded by his great officers, his ministers, the chief citizens and lords of Machærus and the Peræa, as well as strangers, and hath been in a manner inaccessible. I have observed in him, in whatever relation I have seen him, only the bearing that becomes a monarch. The daughter of Aretas, Fatnah, remains still in Tiberias, while Joanna, the wife of the Steward, and chief officer under Herod, performs the duties that had otherwise fallen to her. Of her I know nothing but that she is a devout woman, and in great esteem among our people.

Ziba brings me intelligence, such as he gathers among the servants and soldiers of the palace, that Fatnah will no more reign in Machærus. They speak openly, he says, of the king's love of Herodias, and that he will yet bring about what he has proposed to himself; but that in such case war will ensue between him and the Arabian King.

Yet of these things I have heard from no other. No credible reports of them have come to my ear through any of the guests, nor through any of the rulers of the synagogues.

I have again conversed with Herod upon those matters which brought me to Machærus. He seems like one, who, using caution where he intends to bestow confidence, has waited to observe and know me under the ordinary circumstances of every day, ere he would entrust to me further what concerns so immediately the welfare of himself and kingdom. It was in the most secret apartments of the palace that he again required my presence.

"Julian," said he, "I at first showed thee my willingness to confide in thee, because thou camest to me from Onias. For thy uncle's sake I put my trust in thee, and made to thee revelations such as have been made to few so young in the knowledge I have had of them. I have now seen thee for myself, and from this time, for thine own sake, nothing is withheld, if it be that thy purposes still continue as they were."

I told him that nothing had happened to change them. I waited but to know all he would impart. Whatever should be committed to me, I would perform.

He then gave me, with minuteness, an account of

all that had hitherto been done in Judea, of the persons associated with him, and the forces of every kind that would be at their command; of the obstacles yet lying in the way, and the services required of those who engaged in his affairs.

“Of thee, Julian,” said he, “we desire services in Jerusalem, Cæsarea, and Rome. Moneys are to be raised. Notwithstanding what thou hast seen, it is but as a tithe of what the all-devouring jaws of war will consume. The faithful at Rome, where they are powerful both for numbers and their great wealth, are to be approached by a skilful messenger, that they may be wrought upon to contribute of their riches, although they should refuse to serve in our armies. And in truth we can spare them from our ranks, so they will but impart freely of that which is better. Whom so well could we depute upon this great errand as thyself? Moreover, communications by word of mouth are yet to be had with Sejanus, with whom we are bound in league. In this thou canst serve us. At what time Sejanus rises in Rome, and takes the crown of Tiberius, Herod rises in Judea and sits upon the throne of Israel. But what then, Julian? Is Judea to be then bound to Sejanus as now to Tiberius? So thinks Sejanus; and thus the league stands,—that when the armies of Tiberius are here defeated, as in Italy and the West, the East shall still through me be his. But so will not the league be kept. Judea once her own, the armies of Rome and of apostate Jews once defeated, Israel then reigns in her own right, her new kingdom is come, and it shall never pass away. Who sees not, that can see at all, how all things conspire together to this great

consummation? Does Herod serve but as the tool of the Romans? Let the Roman look to it—let him look to it. He shall see betimes, who serves as tool of the other.”

The quick twinkling eye of the Tetrarch expressed inward satisfaction, and he smiled as the picture he drew rose before him. Although as in every bosom, there was in mine a loathing of deceit, yet who was to be deceived? and what and to whom was to be the profiting? It was but to be a deceiving of the great deceiver himself, and that to win life and liberty, a home and a kingdom for the Israelite, long a wanderer, or a slave on his own soil. The scheme, as I gazed upon it, grew into honor and beauty, as it was in its craft undoubtedly auspicious of success.

I, therefore, as Herod ceased, commended what he had said, and engaged on my part to further his plans, as he should desire, in Rome, Jerusalem, or Cæsarea.

“There lieth now in our way then,” continued the Tetrarch, “but one obstacle.”

He paused.

I asked, “and what is that?”

“John the Baptist,” he answered, with bitterness;—“that wild man of the woods.”

“I see in him no harm,” I answered. “He seems indeed, not only to be harmless, but even a just man.”

“That is it—that is it,” replied the Tetrarch; “the people honor him, and he cannot therefore be touched so well. But he distracts their minds, and draws them away from where they are by us to be directed, and kept. It is reported, he even setteth up for Christ. At least the people are full of wonderings and doubts, and

many believe he will so prove himself, in the face of all present appearances to the contrary."

But I replied, "He has strictly denied that he is Christ, and claims only to be a prophet. Besides, the people seeing none of the marks of the Christ in his manner of life or acts, will soon forsake him."

"It seemeth not so as yet, and it is now since the Tabernacles that he hath led about the people, preaching sedition. He must be silenced."

"Let him be seized by thy power," I replied, "and I fear the issue would be disastrous rather than helpful to our cause. It would turn against thee the affections of multitudes who now throng him and believe in him. Let him alone, and though he may instruct or amuse the people, of what injury to us can be his baptisms of water in the Jordan? It is but so much water gathered up and poured out again."

"That may be," replied the king. "But there is more in John than his baptisms, which, as thou sayest, are but so much water of the Jordan caught up and poured into the stream again. He preacheth—and preacheth sedition among my people. He hath intermeddled with my affairs. Were it not for the people, his idiot, wonder-loving worshippers, his head had ere this graced our palace gates."

I knew well that in what he had said Herod now referred to Herodias and to John's accusations on that account. It was plain that the rumors were well founded, else why the anger of the Tetrarch and his language? In what I myself condemned I could not be silent, and though I more than doubted the issue, I resolved to do what in me lay to draw the king away from a purpose



that, as I firmly believed, would blast all the hopes he was cherishing, and so many with him.

"And doth not John the Baptist counsel well, O King? If he intermeddleth in thy affairs, it is to save thee. Thou canst not marry Herodias without guilt in the eye of the Law—without ruin to thy cause."

"Thou art over bold, young man," said Herod starting, his countenance changing with passion; "It was not for this I placed my confidence in thee. Beware the chafed lion."

"If I see thee, Herod, about to fall from a precipice, am I in fault to hold thee back? I say again—and I fear thee not—to put away thy wife for Herodias is folly, and guilt, and ruin. Have I not just pledged myself to thy cause? Am I not then invested with some rights? Shall I stand idly by and see thee destroy not only thyself, but me, my friends, and my country's hope?"

"Say on, young man, say on," said the Tetrarch, "thou art bold, but I can honor courage."

"I have no more to say," I answered, "than to beseech the king, as he loves his cause and his country, to refrain from that to which he hath put his hand."

"But," said Herod, suddenly calm again, "I am bound; it cannot be; my word is plighted."

"Bind thyself to the right, O King, though in so doing thou shouldst break thy word. Thou canst in nothing be true, being false to God. Why shouldst thou covet this divorce? Is not thy Fatnah the daughter of a king?"

"She is an Arabian. The wife of the King of Israel should be a Jewess."

"A Jewess, rightly considered, is one who feareth God and worketh his will; not who was born of Jewish parents. Is she not virtuous and fair?"

"Aye, and weak. Herodias is the great Herod in female form. With her—and I were doubly armed."

"As we hear, Fatnah is full of kindly virtues—a mother to her people."

"But she is barren."

"Yet were Herodias fruitful as the vines of Judea, the sin would be but the more—she is thy brother's wife!"

The face of Herod again swelled with passion—as if he could bear no more. But he suppressed it.

"Young Roman, he is no brother of mine—I swear it."

"Is not Philip of Jerusalem thy father's son? son of the Great Herod?"

"But yet no brother of mine—for else were half the men of Jerusalem, nay of Judea, methinks, my brothers. I can choose nowhere without incest. This is no kindred in the sight of God, or man."

"It stands so," I answered, "in the law,—and in the Jewish courts."

"In the letter of the law, it may be," he answered, "but not in its spirit; and for the Jewish courts, they are beds of rottenness, and schools but of fraud and cunning. So too, if as thou wilt doubtless further urge, Herodias be the daughter of Aristobulus and so my brother's daughter, I reply again, I own him not. He was no brother of mine. Archelaus was indeed my brother—Olympias is indeed my sister, children of Malthace as well as of Herod—but beyond them I know no brother,

no sister, or else wert thou perhaps a brother, and Joanna, Chuza's wife, a sister."

"Think not, O King," I replied, "to rest in reasons such as these. They are but gilded toys that amuse the mind awhile, and perhaps may dazzle the minds of others for a time, but they are of no solid worth; and the eye and the mind will soon see them as they are. The people of our land, if in many things they are corrupt, if they honor not the law of Moses, as they ought, yet they revere, in some sort, the great law of justice written by the finger of God on the heart, before which the high and the low are alike arraigned, and will be judged in the great day,—and so it is not, O King, the voice of John alone that condemns and accuses, it is the voice of the people, and so the voice of God. They behold thee about to commit injustice and folly in Israel, and their tongues rebuke thee; and those the more who are building on thee their hopes of redemption. Can they think that he who abuses a lesser power shall safely be entrusted with a greater? Shall not righteousness become the anointed of the Lord? Shall any other rule in his name? Thou trustest, Herod, even that thou shalt be hailed the Christ of God! and thou knowest that many now do hold thee so. But shall that faith abide? For in his Messiah the Jew looks not merely for the son of David, but the son of God; not only for the King, but the Priest and Prophet also; for the sovereign, but for the reformer, not less, of his fallen country. Thou art tearing that faith violently out of the hearts of those in whom it was taking root. I, even I, have deemed that upon thee God was now about to lay his honor; that in thee the new kingdom should take its beginning; that though thou be

not indeed the expected Messiah, thou art his forerunner, and he by whom the way is to be prepared for the establishment of the reign that is to be eternal. Destroy not the hopes thus raised in so many hearts, for whose fulfilment there has been so long tarrying. Leave us our faith. Abandon not those who gather together beneath thy standard. We are ready and waiting at thy chariot wheels to bear thee on to victory. Send us not away empty and despairing."

While I said these and many other things, not knowing what might befall, the countenance of the king waxed pale and red by turns, and his frame trembled. When I had ceased, he said with a voice scarce articulate through the raging of inward passion,

"I swear, by the soul of my father, young Jew, that I have now a mind to see thee hurled from the topmost tower of Machærus a thousand fathoms into the gulphs below. Am I a king to be thus bearded by a boy? Thou standest there immovable and undaunted, as though thou wert the king, and I an arraigned malefactor! Who art thou? Mayhap thou art the Christ? or else Elias?"

So greatly was Herod transported by his passion, and withal a sort of terror, that in these last words he seemed as much in earnest, as in derision. He hastily walked back and forth as if wavering in his mind—and resolving with difficulty.

At length he paused before me again, his countenance now calmer, but with a language spread over it, which I could not read.

"Young Jew, I am willing to believe thou hast spoke the truth."

"I am sure," I answered with force, "of nothing so much."

"Wouldst thou repeat it?" cried the Tetrarch with returning passion.

"If it would help thee, or Judea, I would repeat it an hundred times."

"Thou art like the face of the Dead Sea—no raging moves thee. But of this no more. Listen. I am sure now that thou art honest and true. There lives not the man who else had dared to thrust himself as thou hast done into the lion's den. I can now trust thee for a friend of Israel, whom no fear of peril or death shall turn aside from the true path that leads to her honor. There is no place of glory, or of power to which thou mayest not aspire. I have for thee the witness of Onias and thine own. But one thing I have now found, that thou hast eyes before and behind, and canst penetrate the dark. Let there then be no deceit betwixt me and thee. Touching the wife of Philip of Jerusalem, I believe thou hast spoke in part the truth. I see the weight of thy reasons, and I shall honor and keep the law—as thou construest the law—whilst the occasion demands. Till the battle is gained there shall be no Jew so observant of the law as I. The liberty of Israel shall not suffer harm through me. My loves and my hates shall alike submit themselves to her interests. Surely in this I show myself a Jew, as devout as any Pharisee in Jerusalem. What thinkest thou?"

I said, that in yielding so much he did well, and I doubted not that he would in the end fully keep the law.

"Think no such thing, young man," replied the king.

"Let there be no deceit, I say, between me and thee. Give not up thy own judgment; thy last words show thee halting. Mayhap thou still conceivest hopes of me as of the anointed of God?"

"Nay, not so far as that. They are vanished."

"Thou was then a fool with the rest in Israel?"

"I was in doubt. I was ignorant. But I doubt no longer. Now I know."

"And yet, Jew, why now so confident on the other side? Who shall fathom the purposes of the most high God? of him who holds the universe in the hollow of his hands, who sees of all enterprises the end from the beginning, and can accomplish the mightiest plans by the humblest and basest instruments? Verily if thou art sure, Son of Alexander, that I am not the Christ, thou art surer than I. The people think me so. They call on me to arise, and APPEAR! Secret messengers arrive from all parts of the land and hail me King of Israel! Son of God! the long looked-for Messiah! I have not been to them, they have come to me. What is the spirit that moves them? May it not be the spirit of Jehovah? Who can say? When such things have been, and I have turned back into myself and mused, have thought of my present power, and the sure grasp I now may lay on the Roman greatness here in Israel, crushing it as a sea-bird's egg, and the future has thus risen before me, it hath truly seemed as if God were in very deed working with me. Visions have come and gone, there have been inward promptings and impulses, and influxes of celestial light, that have been as the voice of God, calling on me to arise, and make haste, and tarry not, for the great redemption was drawn nigh, and by



my hand was it to be wrought out. Who can say more than this? And who shall dare to say that I am not the Redeemer of Israel?"

Herod now seemed another being. His voice became plaintive and reverent, his countenance opened with expressions of generosity and faith. He seemed like one who was no trifler or cajoler, but a true believer in his own words; as if he were in no respect the same person who had said what had gone before. But in a moment longer, when the sudden flame had died away, he sank down again into his more proper self, and I beheld only the Tetrarch of Galilee, powerful, shrewd, and dangerous.

Suddenly turning to me he then added,

"Julian, from this day we are friends. My heart is known to thee, and thine to me. To others, we are, as we may be. Let us go on together in peace in the great work set for us to do. Let all else be forgot but the one common aim and end, the overthrow of Rome and the glory of Israel. Leave me to do with the people as I may. What fancies soever concerning me they may have, let them have them—and they may be more than fancies. God knoweth—not man."

I said, that I was bound to him and would serve him. There was a darkness which at present I could not penetrate; but I should wait for light to fall upon it from the great source of light.

We then conversed of the present condition of affairs in the Peræa, in Galilee, and Judea; of the measures next to be pursued, and of those fittest to undertake them.

While we thus conversed, it was told to Herod, that

some one required to see him. Chuza then entered, saying that Onias had arrived, and desired to see both him and Julian of Rome.

"He is welcome," cried the King; "let him approach."

Onias in a few moments more was with us.

"Welcome, Prince of the Jordan," cried Herod, as the noble form of Onias appeared. "Welcome to Machærus. Let it not be an offence if I say, that thy kinsman here hath for a season blotted thee out of our thoughts."

"I am happy," replied Onias, "whenever a worthier is found for one less so."

"Not a worthier, Onias," rejoined the King, "only a newer. The new has an early worth, that for a season outshines all other; but it is not trusted, nor does it last, as the old. Thou, Onias, art old wine from the vats of Herod in Cæsarea. Thy kinsman, Julian, but the squeezings, rich and rare, of the last vintage. This minds me—how went the vintage with thee on the Jordan, Onias?"

"The presses could scarce do the work," he replied, "the vines made for them. They bent even to breaking with their heavy burdens."

"And the vine of vines," continued the King, "that clings round thee—thy fair daughter, Judith, how fares the damsel?"

"She is well," briefly answered Onias.

"But favors not the royal cause," rejoined the King."

"Only as of old."

"Ah, she is fond of dreams like youth," said Herod; "I

warrant John Baptist takes her fancy.—But what, Onias, of John? where resorts he now?”

“He is now,” replied Onias, “in the wilderness of Jordan, nigh unto Bethabara; where many, as I learn, are still gathered to his Baptism. I passed on my way through the village, but he with his followers was withdrawn into the deep valleys among the neighboring hills.”

So, on these and the like themes, we for a while conversed.

Wholly unexpected as was the appearance of Onias, I was yet rejoiced to see him. I felt that I needed some one, to whom to turn for counsel in the position in which I found myself, and thy brother, although himself almost a stranger, seemed now and here where I stood alone, like a parent. When our first interview with Herod was over, and he had dismissed us until the hour of supper, it was with a sense of relief not easy to imagine, that I imparted to him such of my difficulties and doubts, as without treachery to the Tetrarch I was still at liberty to speak of. I was happy in obtaining his approval in what I had done and in what I had promised. He himself I found more than ever elated with the prospect that was now opened, of immediate and prosperous action. His fervent and holy zeal rekindled what of mine had begun to grow cold; so that after even a brief communion with him I also was impatient that our affairs should be brought to a speedy issue.

Herod having constrained us, we have passed many days within his palace and city; but they have been days of busy care in the thing which chiefly concerns us. Messengers have arrived, and letters from those in the

confidence of the Tetrarch, and have been despatched in return, whose object is in great part to infuse every where that leaven, which shall work in the hearts of those where it hath been deposited, and from them still spread, till it shall raise all to one pitch of devotion to God, and the birth and growth of his kingdom.

In the leisure that has here fallen to my share, I have traversed the shores of the Dead Sea in the immediate neighborhood of Machærus, and surveyed on all sides the wonderful position of this impregnable Fortress. Nature herself has made it almost perfect in its security, and art has more than added what was left incomplete. Nature too has supplied what, in a region so abounding in rock and sand, she generally denies, copious fountains of water springing up among the deep fissures. And as if designing it for the abode of those whom she greatly favored, there wells up not only water, cold and pure as the springs of Lebanon, but that which is both hot and medicinal also. Boiling springs shoot up in many places, and pour over the rocks into basins below, sometimes natural and sometimes wrought by art, their healing waters; to which there resort constantly, not only from Machærus, but from Herodium and the country round about, multitudes of the diseased to try their virtues. Everywhere among these deep and rocky chasms are there signs of heat, in the waters which thus rise to the surface as if driven upward by subterranean forces, and in the smoke which oozes everywhere from out the soil—ascending, we may believe, from the flaming caverns where the ancient cities of Idolatry lie engulfed, whose inhabitants, while some are drowned in

floods of water, others are buried in lakes of eternal fire, ever burning, yet ever unconsumed.

Many being now at Machærus from all parts of Judea, who are secretly joined with Herod in his plans, he has given a banquet, to which those were invited only, to whom he has declared himself more fully. This feast was had not in the banqueting room of which I have already spoken, but in one in a less public part of the palace, within the Fortress, separated by other buildings and lofty walls from the sight and hearing of all save those who are specially permitted to approach.

This room is vast, and of those dark Egyptian forms, which, notwithstanding their beauty, do also carry with them a sort of terror, with which they fail not to impress the mind of the beholder. So is it seen in the Temple of Isis not far from the Forum of Augustus, both in its outward but especially in the gloomy shapes of its interior decorations. Here the dark hue of the stone of which the columns were wrought could scarce be changed to a cheerful brightness, though the glare of innumerable lamps was cast upon them. The flames of the lamps themselves, the only source of what was bright, poured forth from the hissing jaws of fiery serpents; or else in wreaths played around the sad faces of the melancholy Sphinx. From the table indeed, while the eye rested upon it, there shot up a splendor, which could hardly be borne, from the polished surface of innumerable vessels of silver and gold, from pitchers of glass charged to the brim with wines of every hue, which gave back the light again in dazzling brilliance as from crystal itself, and from the robes of the guests gorgeous

in their color and forms, woven of gold or silver thread, and thickset with all the jewelry of the Orient. Herod himself seemed hardly to belong to the same race with those around him, so transformed did he seem by reason of the imperial magnificence of the shining tissues in which he was arrayed, and the glittering crown that adorned his head. Not less too did he seem to differ from others by the greatness of his bearing, which was more than that of a man or a king, and by which those who were present confessed themselves awed, or oppressed. There was no rude clamor or noisy mirth, as is customary when men assemble to enjoy the hour. The luxuries came and went untasted, or were eaten sparingly. They who conversed spoke in tones scarce audible, not in those of grief, but of deepest earnestness. We were as a company of persons too grave from the greatness of the thoughts that were in each heart, to be seduced to any wantonness by the enticements of the inviting board. For each who sat at its side was a Jew—who came there burdened with the care of his country's deliverance, and knowing that now the final pledge was to be given and received of loyal devotion to her cause, and to him to whom as chief they had consented to entrust its conduct. The signs of deep thought and anxious musing were on the dark faces of my countrymen—whom but for the mockery, as it seemed, of their brilliant garments, and the surrounding glare, one might have taken for a secret assembly of assassins. The music too, that poured in upon us its harmonies, seemed in its wailing notes, or sepulchral tones to be a strange contradiction to the purpose for which we were gathered together, and as if prophecy against us. It was not

easy to shake one's spirit free from the power which accidents were thus disposed to exercise over it. Doubts and apprehensions arose out of mere shadows, at which it was easier to force a smile, than to dismiss them from the mind.

The feast, I need not say, was therefore brief. That, the design of which was to give pleasure alone, was the only thing that gave discomfort, or pain. For when the attending servants of the banquet were withdrawn, and the sound of the music was hushed, and each one gave utterance to the real feelings that were within, then indeed a change came over the countenances of those who sat there. Alone, and each was gloomy and despondent; but when we were one, by each sharing the sentiments of the other, all were alike cheerful and confiding. Many, obtaining the ear of the whole assembly, did not fail to increase the ardor of those who listened, by the reasons which they urged for the enterprise at the present moment, and against an increased delay. And what chance of failure would there be, they urged, with a chief, whose providence had supplied, while others had slept, arms and harness for every Israelite who would use them, and by his league with the aspiring Sejanus, had secured the aid of Rome herself in the work of her own destruction!

But the passions of all were inflamed to the highest pitch, as Herod himself, when he had listened in silence to what had been said by others, arose and defended the cause in which he had engaged, showed from the Scriptures the fitness of the time for the deliverance for which all were looking, related the steps which by him alone and without concert had been taken, and laid open before



all an exact enumeration of the stores of every kind of armament he had heaped together in cities and fortresses, which he named, described the numbers of those—principal Jews in every part of Palestine—who were already bound to him, and the measures to be adopted for securing the aid of the Israelites of Rome, and those dwelling in the other cities of Asia and Europe. What Jew was there, he asked, whether of Judea, Galilee, or Peræa, or even Samaria, who, however Providence might have cast his lot, would not add of his substance to the treasury of the Lord; would not clamor to be permitted to put forth his strength to rescue Jerusalem, the city of the Great King, from the pollution of the Gentile. Many times had Jerusalem suffered from the oppressor; many times had Israel been beneath the feet of the conqueror; but never had her captivity been such as now. For now there are those even, who are pleased with their slavery, who cherish this union, though of dependence, with the mistress of the earth; who are losing the character of the Jew in that of the Roman; who, like our ancestors of old, are joining themselves to idols. Who knows not that our very taxes are gathered by Jewish hands to be paid into the Gentile's treasury? In Babylon we mixed not with the blood of the conqueror, nor joined his rites, nor followed his customs, nor ever gloried in our shame. In Egypt we remained a people, distinct and peculiar, and as we entered it so we departed from it, the likeness of the twelve Patriarchs seen in all the thousands of their descendants. Now we are falling each day more and more into the mass of all-engulphing Rome; where, like so many other nations, we too shall be swallowed up and lost. What captivity was ever to

be compared with this? And what though it was to his own ancestors—to whom so much as Herod the Great—that this apostacy was to be traced for its beginning? What though he himself had joined hand in hand with the great iniquity, what though the sect among the people that bore his name was a Roman party, these were but the more urgent reasons for immediate action,—that before it was too late, and the spirit of the nation utterly dead, their remaining strength might be put forth for its salvation. The time was now come, he was assured as from God himself, the hour was now arrived, he knew it by the spirit of prophecy, that the hopes of this great people were to be fulfilled. The weeks of Daniel the Prophet were numbered; the sceptre had departed from Israel,—Rome wields it—and the lawgiver from between her feet, and the day when Shiloh should appear had dawned. It is the event that shall seal the prophecy, the deed done that shall show the Prophet. Our care is to redeem Israel. That being done, our sight will be clear to know her King in her Redeemer, and greet him as rightful head of a kingdom, who hath saved it; a kingdom of which there shall be no end, whose boundaries shall be those of the whole world.

As Herod ceased, and even before he ceased, loud cries of exultation broke from those who, as the Tetrarch had spoken, had gathered round him. “Herod,” said some, “is the Christ we need.” “All things show Herod to be the true Messiah,” said others; “many times have we been deceived, but now we are sure.” “Israel redeemed from captivity will show us who is the Christ.” “Do not all proofs and signs point to Herod?” “If we may not believe in him, where shall we look?

for the time is now come, and will soon be past." "The people make their own Messiah; let them join themselves heartily to Herod, and by him they will save themselves." These and a thousand exclamations like them, in a confused murmur filled the air.

When it had subsided, and others, and among them Onias, had declared their faith and their purposes, and by their ardor had helped still more to stir the passions and kindle the zeal of all who were present, and by their arguments had added to the confidence they were disposed to place in Herod,—the company separated.

But many times have the same persons again assembled, that they might make yet more perfect the schemes they have taken in hand, and learn, by information derived from those who dwell in different and distant parts of the land, the true state of the Jewish mind in those regions. When all had thus been done, in which it was necessary that we should bear a part, we took our leave of Herod, and departed from Machærus.

Such, my mother, have been my fortunes at Machærus, and thus do I stand towards Herod. In no long time, if I take upon myself the charge Herod would impose, will it be my office to visit Rome. Farewell.

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When I look back over the long period of time that has intervened, to the scenes witnessed by me at Machærus, and to my intercourse with the Tetrarch, I can feel no surprise, that I gave myself to the extent I did, into his hands. As I recall the image of Herod, there was very much in his countenance, his demeanor, his form,

his voice, the manner of his speech, to affect the mind of any one coming within the charmed circle of his influence, especially of a young man who is easily wrought upon by whatever partakes of the mysterious. That was the secret of Herod's power. It was difficult, I should rather say impossible, to penetrate him. He ever assumed a new face, and one day appeared a different person, both in the aspect of his form and the state of his mind and the features of his character, from what he was another; so that when it seemed as if some progress had been made, to-day, towards comprehending him, it was found, to-morrow, to have led to no results that possessed any value. And in respect of that strange fascination, corresponding to what is ascribed to the more formidable serpents, by which he drew those whom he desired into his control, and compelled them to do his will against their own, and yet freely, it can only be said, that no other person of whom I have ever heard, either through history or otherwise, or have ever known, can be compared with him. There was by no means the greatness of soul in him, which, notwithstanding his atrocities, must be allowed to have distinguished his father. But there was often the semblance of it, which it was not easy to distinguish from the reality. Subtlety and a mind fertile in expedients were qualities that particularly marked him. But above all others, that of which I have already spoken,—the serpent power was eminently his. I, in my youth, knew not what it was that held me. I only knew that there was an attraction in the man, which, however, in some things and for some reasons I would willingly resist it, ever obtained the mastery and prevailed.

## XIV.

I TRUST, my mother, that my letter from Machærus by the worthy hands of our neighbor, the Goldsmith, has been safely received. It was not until nearly the last day of our tarrying there, that, among the crowds coming and going, my eye caught his familiar countenance, which instantly returned with smiles and friendly greetings my signs of recognition. His affairs have greatly prospered, he assured me, as we conversed at Machærus; inasmuch as, out of many applicants, he has been chosen by Herod to work in gold and ivory a gigantic cup as a gift to Tiberius, and a vase of scarcely less size or value for Sejanus, both which labors he has undertaken, and trusts by the manner in which he shall perform them to transmit his name with honor to posterity. He will cover them with histories, commemorating the principal events in the life of each of the great personages for whom they are designed. Truly he is an eminent artist; but this appointment of his is not, as his vanity would persuade him, the great event of the times. There are some greater. Nevertheless the little worker in gold and ivory is an honest man, if vain, and I doubt not that, as he promised to do, he has borne my letter safely, and himself placed it in your hands.

Upon arriving again at the house of Onias, we were received, as you will believe, with joy by the solitary

Judith,—solitary I say,—for though there are, as I have already represented, many members of our wide spread family beneath her roof, and under her care, yet are there none to whom she can turn for that full companionship which she shares with her father, and now, though in less degrees, with myself. But though we relieved her solitude by our presence, I fear we brought little else to comfort her; for it was evident that all the news we imparted of the purposes of Herod and of our partnership in them was anything rather than agreeable to her. She could not, nor did she essay to disguise her grief.

“No profiting, my father, I fear me,” she said, “can come to Israel by such an instrument. Herod is not he who should reign over Israel. It is another head we need. Aims he at anything save his own exaltation? The people are every day looking for their king, and Herod, building upon this fond expectation would offer them himself! What better would he be for Israel than his father? Could we think of Herod the Great as the Christ?”

“He, my daughter, enslaved us to Rome, great as he was; Antipas delivers and redeems us.”

“And suppose, my father, we were redeemed and delivered, and sat beneath an independent prince; I see not how we should be the gainers. How much differs Herod from Tiberius? With the power I fear he would show the cruelty and the lust of Tiberius. Such should not be the Messiah of Israel. It is a prophet, mighty in word and in deed, a teacher of righteousness, a reformer of our manners whom we want, not less, surely, than a King.”

“These, Judith, are the notions sown in thy brain by

thy Samaritan mother, (now in Abraham's bosom,) and thy Samaritan nurse—a people—save that God, as in them, hath appeared in a few, cursed and reprobate. Reject they not the Prophets, and through them the counsels of God? How should they judge worthily of the Saviour of Israel?"

"Yet they believe in Moses, and Moses hath spoken of the Christ."

"Moses, my child, knew and spoke but in part; they who have come later have declared more fully the purposes of God. Why have the latter prophets come, but to add somewhat to what was known before? And by them we know that Messiah shall be the King and Prince, as well as Prophet. Teacher he shall be—but Prince and Ruler also."

"If so, my father, how shall Herod fulfil the hope of Israel? He may be King and Prince, but how shall he be Prophet and Instructor?"

"David, my daughter, was a sinner—but he was a prophet also. Solomon, the wisest of men was not the best—and Moses in his anger slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. Herod is not without spot; but God may pour into him what of his own wisdom he will, and when he hath delivered Israel by the power of his arm, he may also purge and cleanse the soul, by the healing medicine of his truth. God shall shine so through him, that he shall be no longer himself, but shall be called Immanuel. In the works he shall do, and the words he shall speak, he shall be God with us."

"Oh! far rather, my father, would I, that even John were He. God, we may believe, will, when he speaks,



speak through a holy mouth. John is holy and wise. The people revere him."

"Be not, my child, so easy to be led astray by thy fancies, or the false pretences of cunning men. Thou knowest how many since the time of Archelaus have brought slaughter, robberies, rebellion, and misery upon our land through their own wicked ambition. John may prove but another of these. If from God, he seems to have no power but such as may be sufficient, by and by, to inflame the multitude with some mad expectation of dominion, which after a few attempts to gain it, will end in confusion and blood. Whom God shall clothe with his authority, him will he strengthen with his arm, and the signs of his power shall be manifest. These are seen already in Herod and in only him. And throughout the length and breadth of the land are there those among the chief men, and in Jerusalem especially, who stand with their loins girded, and their lamps burning, waiting for the cry that shall announce him to have arisen, that he may enter into his kingdom. John, in Herod's judgment, is but a habitation of devils; and so, ere long, he trusts to prove it upon him."

But no arguments of Onias, nor of thy son, can prevail to change the fixed mind of Judith. Nor of her only. For more than ever are the people drawn towards John with expectations of they know not what. Great numbers still flock to his preaching and his baptism, leaving their homes and their employments; and although he does not as yet give any evidence that he is the person for whom they are waiting, yet they are persuaded that he will presently give such evidence, or will, according to his frequent declarations, be followed and accom-

panied by one in whom all the prophecies of the Scriptures, and all the wishes of the people shall find their fulfilment.

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Of late the declarations of the Baptist concerning another, of whom he is but the precursor, have become the more express and distinct. The thoughts of those who come to him are studiously turned from himself to one of greater power, who is soon to succeed him. Although John himself cannot intend to mark out Herod by the mysterious language he uses, yet it fails not to bring him before the minds of others, as the only one from whom it seems possible that help should come. So that unconsciously he lends strength to our cause. And we are persuaded, that, were Herod's affairs now so far advanced that he could at once present himself before the nation, as he did before his few adherents at Machærus, the people would gather round him with a zeal, and with numbers and a power that Pilate would in vain attempt to withstand. But alas! very much remains to be done ere such a step can be taken; yet so confident are many of success under any circumstances of action, so uneasy under delay, that our chief danger springs from the possibility of rash and sudden outbreaks of zeal, before the measures which we deem essential can be completed. The greater need of caution exists here from the so near neighborhood of the Romans in Beth-Harem, and our frequent intercourse with Saturninus. But Pilate believing himself to have no ground of apprehension beyond Onias, no suspicions attach to the many communications which now take place between us and Herod, and would not were they

known to Saturninus. But they are too well guarded to become known.

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We are, now that the force of the winter is spent, full of cares. Messengers arrive and depart by night, going and coming between Beth-Harem, Machærus, Tiberias, Sepphoris, and Jerusalem. Herod's adherents increase day by day, and our confidence with them. But as our confidence and hope increase the disappointment and sorrow of Judith increase more than in a just proportion to them. She becomes now even vehement in her expressions of disapprobation, or detestation I should rather say, of Herod. All this Onias refers to her Samaritan nurture, and so leaves it. But in the heart of Judith God had planted that, I am sure, which demands more for its satisfaction than that which he hath bestowed upon others. It is not her rearing only that causes the difference. One needs only to observe her countenance, or listen to the sounds of her voice, to know that another and higher sense is in her; and this especially when she is seen or heard reciting those parts of the Prophets which most delight or instruct her, or in singing to her harp at the close of a Sabbath day the sacred hymns of David. Never did the praise of the Divine Poet so exalt me, or his strains of penitence and sadness so depress me, as when borne to my ear on the voice of Judith. Yet whatever she may draw from the Prophets and the Law, and whatever she may impart to others, she feels and confesses dissatisfaction. Their words reach not high enough, they descend not deep enough for the cravings of her heart. What would she have?

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The successes of John, and the language which he continues to use concerning Herodias, alarm and enrage the Tetrarch. To-day a messenger has arrived bearing letters to both Onias and myself. Herod thus writes to Onias.

“Herod Antipas, Tetrarch, to Onias of Beth-Harem.

“We hear concerning John, that he still preaches on the Jordan, and that yet greater numbers attend him, drawn together in great part by the violence with which he assaileth ourselves, our power, the priests, the chief men among the Pharisees, and many others upon a proper reverence of whom, however, our law insisteth, and the welfare of the state dependeth. The minds of the people are moreover turned from us to him. We cannot look to obtain a place in their regards where he hath first entered, nor so long as he is allowed to keep possession. It is our will therefore, if it also seem good to you, that he be seized, and having been first scourged, be forbidden to baptize or preach within our realm, and dismissed from its borders. And if in the malice of his heart he should remain disobedient, that he be then sent close prisoner to Machærus. Thus will the way be made clear of what is now a hindrance.

“Philip of Iturea joins us; or which avails as much, standeth neuter.

“These will be delivered by the hand of our faithful Chuza.”

It was plain from this epistle of Herod, that the spies whom he had constantly employed had not returned to him an exact account of either the doings of the Baptist, or of the effects which they were producing upon the

people. For nothing could appear more evident to Onias and myself, and to others who were careful to observe narrowly, than that John was, with however little intention, preparing the way quite as much for Herod as for himself or any other person. In respect to his charges against the Tetrarch in the matter of his brother's wife, the populace take but little thought about them, not knowing how the truth may stand, and leaving such affairs to be managed as it may please the parties concerned. The laws under which both Jews and Samaritans change husband and wife are such, that acts of divorcement take place continually, and make but little stir. While therefore they pay slight regard to what John hath said of this, they have caught greedily at all that he hath let drop concerning his follower. His speech has indeed been ambiguous and obscure; either with intention so, or because he is an instrument merely in the hands of a Mightier Power, and utters oracles, by himself not clearly understood. No urgency of those who have pressed about him has availed to make such declarations more precise. The multitudes therefore have interpreted his language as their minds have prompted, and their secret wishes have directed. Very many, accordingly, have not doubted, that whatever may have been the purpose of John, Herod is the person to whom they are to look. He has thus been set before the people more and more, and greater numbers than before are coming to look upon his pretensions with favor. The large sect of the Herodians is beginning, throughout their body, to unite to their attachment to the Herodian family, and the Roman usages they have introduced, a faith in Antipas as the great re-

storer, who, at the same time that he shall reëstablish the independence of Judea, shall with a proper observance of the Law, freely allow the licenses in which they now indulge, and which they imagine to be needful to the extending of the influence of their Law and religion, and the gaining of proselytes beyond the bounds of Judea.

Onias, considering these things, thought it not best that John should either be driven from the country, or suffer any injury at the hands of Herod, and wrote thus to the Tetrarch.

“In the judgment,” said he, “of those in whom thou art wont to put confidence, and to whom thou hast left the determination of the present affair, it would not tend to the furthering of that which we have in hand, were the Baptist driven from these regions, or by the soldiers seized and scourged. The effects of his labors redound more to thy interests than even his own. For while he declares to the foolish multitudes who surround him, that he is not himself the Christ—a declaration not in truth needed to those, who have any discernment at all in the things of God—he at the same time saith that he, as Elias, hath preceded him, and that he shall soon appear. Wherefore it happens, that the people believing him to be a prophet, and seeking to discover whither he would direct their thoughts, are in great numbers led to thee! For in no other quarter whatsoever can they behold a ray of light. If John, they say, be not the Christ, and he doth no miracle, nor giveth any other sign that he is that prophet, to whom can they look but to thee? So that while he intendeth quite otherwise, John buildeth for thee; notwithstanding that some, who are utterly

without eyes or judgment, he succeedeth in turning against thee. But for thy brother Philip's wife, Great King, all Israel were on thy side. May Jehovah guide, and in due time exalt thee."

Letters in reply to this have been received from the Tetrarch, showing his acquiescence in the judgment of Onias, and consenting also, out of regard to urgent representations, to relinquish the further prosecution of his affair with Herodias. It was only on such consent on his part that I would agree to serve his cause. With others also it was made a condition of adherence.

Since these things have been determined, a new vigor has been put into all his followers. Redoubled efforts are making, and the time draws instantly on, when what is now hidden and concealed will be revealed in the plain light of day.

I am not surprised to learn from thy letters, that in Rome the same things are to be observed among many as here; and I hear the like also of our people wherever they are scattered, whether in Greece, Egypt, or the farther East. There is among them all, as letters from all parts inform us, as well as the reports of merchants and travellers, one and the same expectation. Within the limits of Judea and Galilee the thoughts of all orders of people dwell upon this hope. The appearance, and much more the prophetic declarations of John, however dark and ambiguous, which, of late, both Onias and myself have heard from him with our own ears, have helped to impart to it new ardor, and give it a yet deeper place in the heart. All this works mightily for us; and I trust before another moon it will be shown throughout



all the coasts of Israel, that the hope on which they have fed has been neither poison nor ashes, but as the very food which God himself hath provided to nourish the soul, and be for the salvation of his people. Every day do the people groan beneath new exactions of our avaricious conquerors ; every day do they find their liberty abridged more and more, themselves and their children subject to cruelties the most wanton and oppressive. Pilate's conduct in Cæsarea, his massacres in Jerusalem, his slaughter of the Galileans while offering their sacrifices, and the lesser acts of tyranny of which none or few hear or know save those who suffer, have served, together with what hath taken place on the Jordan, to put fire into men's bosoms, and to kindle there a new and fiercer zeal for God, and his Law, and Judea.

## XV.

It is many days, my mother, since I last wrote. Strange events and unlooked for have happened in the meantime to keep me silent, and attentive only to what was taking place immediately around us. In the midst of our enterprises we have been suddenly arrested by the appearance of another prophet, if prophet he be, on the banks of the Jordan! Where there was but one, there are now two; where there was but John, there are now John and Jesus, for that is the name of him who has now joined him. All the region round about us is in a ferment of curiosity and hope, and so distracted are men's minds, that Herod, and all we who are joined with him, pause at once in our movements. Every arm must hang lifeless until what has now occurred shall receive its interpretation.

The account of these things was first received thus.

It became necessary for me, in obedience to letters received from Herod, to depart for Tiberias, where during the spring and summer seasons,—as being cooler,—he chiefly resides. Ziba, having completed our preparations, was awaiting me at the Portico overlooking the Jordan. As I stood conversing with Judith, unwilling to depart while that pleasure could be prolonged, choosing also that the twilight should deepen farther into the evening shade ere I betook myself to the public ways,

Onias, who had been some days absent at Machærus, suddenly arrived. He had plainly ridden fast and far, the foam ran from the animal from which he sprang, and he himself seemed disturbed. When he had, as always, affectionately saluted us, he asked, "whither I was bound?"

I said, "to Tiberias."

"Since what has happened," he replied, "at Bethabara, it can be of no service."

We asked, "of what do you speak? we have heard nothing."

"That is strange," replied Onias. "Beth-Harem I found stirred throughout. I marvel that Shammai and Zadok have not already been here. What I speak of," continued Onias, "is of the appearance of another prophet, or of the Messiah himself, on the banks of the Jordan at Bethabara."

We expressed our astonishment, and besought him to relate all he had learned.

"He came yesterday," resumed Onias, "to John to receive with others his baptism. I had not yet arrived there. But thus I was told by those who were there. It was about the ninth hour of the day when, as John was baptizing in the stream, his kinsman, Jesus from Nazareth, came, among others, asking to be baptized also. They said that as John saw him approaching, he paused and looked steadfastly upon him with such sort of reverence in his eyes, as if he had beheld a person greatly exalted above himself,—yea, even as if he had seen an angel from Heaven,—and that at first he refused to baptize him, as being himself the inferior teacher, which did not fail to fill John's disciples with the most

extreme astonishment, and not less all who stood near; for that John is a prophet sent of God, his followers do not doubt, but boast themselves continually of his authority, and do not scruple to say, as they believe, that he will in the event prove himself the Christ."

"That we continually hear," I said.

"But what immediately happened," resumed thy brother, "filled all who were present with greater wonder still. For they affirm that, when John's unwillingness was overcome by the earnest request or command of Jesus, and they had gone into the river, and while the Baptist poured on the water of purification, a great light suddenly shone on all, beyond the brightness of the day, as if from the opened heavens, and at the same time a voice was heard, not as the voice of a man, declaring him the son of God. This heavenly sign was but for a moment, and was then withdrawn. The multitude were filled with both fear and amazement, and when it had passed, could hardly say whether what they had witnessed were a reality or a dream. But while they questioned among themselves, Jesus disappeared from the midst of them, and has not since been found."

"This is wonderful, my father, indeed," said Judith. "It surely seems as if God were now visiting us. The long silence seems broken. First John, and now another. Surely, my father, you will give heed to this."

"I have not denied, my child, to John the praise of a righteous man. I have denied him as the Christ only. He is truly a man of God. What hath now happened in Bethabara, fills me, Judith, not less than thyself, with astonishment, and with hope also. Doubt not that I shall wait to know what this vision may mean. My

trust is even in God, that he will yet appear for his people, and how he shall appear, by what signs and by what mediator, whether angel or man, our ignorance cannot say. Whoever shall come with the authority of God, him will I receive. Jesus may be he."

As Onias said these things there was the sound of approaching steps and voices, and in a moment Shammai, Zadok, with others of the synagogue, joined us. They were rejoiced to find Onias at home.

"Now," said Shammai, "let us know the truth, for thou hast been in Bethabara, and, as we hear in Beth-Harem, wast present at the baptism. We have come for this end, to hear thy report and bear it back to the city."

They were sorry, and greatly surprised to learn that Onias had not himself been present.

"Thus it is," said Zadok, "we know not what nor whom to believe. So of the appearance itself, may we well doubt if aught were seen beyond the light of a hot sun passing out from behind a cloud, or heard, beyond the rushing of the wind among the trees. The story by this time at Jerusalem speaks, I will warrant, of the Heavens being on fire, and of legions of angels descending."

"Nay, nay, Zadok," said Onias, "not so. Though I saw not myself, I know those of Bethabara, who were present and witnessed the appearance. It was as hath been reported to you, if an honest man is to be believed, (and not one only but very many,) who relates what he saw with his own eyes and heard with his own ears. They, indeed, who stood remote on the banks, and were not among such as knew what was taking place, but

were attentive to other things, said that they heard only a noise as of thunder, and saw only a light as of the lightning. But they only are to be credited who stood by."

"But what," said Zadok, "hath become of the new prophet?"

"While the people," replied Onias, "were talking with each other, overwhelmed with astonishment and fear, he was seen to depart by many who were near him towards the mountains, none hindering or following, or so much as asking whither he would go."

"Well," said Shammai, "these are strange things. But what is strange oft vanishes when more is heard and known."

"And sometimes grows," said Judith, "to what is stranger still."

"Yes, daughter," he replied, "you say true; so that patient waiting for the full event is the part of the wise. But," continued the Ruler, turning to Onias, "whence came this Jesus?—you have told us whither he is gone,—for in Beth-Harem some say one thing, and some another. One affirms he is from Judea near Hebron, because he is a kinsman of John; others that he is from Bethlehem,—and others from Galilee."

"The last are right," answered Onias, "he is of Galilee."

"He were better from some other part of the land," said Shammai, "for his own sake."

"He is not only from Galilee," continued Onias, "but from Nazareth in Galilee."

"Ha, ha," laughed Zadok, "prosperity await him! A prophet from Nazareth! when a just man shall be

found among the Sadducees, a holy man among the Esenes, or an honest man among the publicans, then may a prophet come from among the Nazarenes. They are truly the progeny of swine."

"It will at least," said Shammai, "take more than a day to win hearers and believers."

"That may be," said Judith; "yet if he should perchance overcome such prejudgments, it would then be so much the more in his favor."

"Perchance! perchance!" cried Zadok, "that was a good word, maiden, to put in. There is little danger of such victory."

"Well," said Judith, "with Shammai we will wait and see."

"Yes, child," answered Zadok, "we will wait, and wait we shall, till Jordan runs backwards to his springs, ere we shall see a prophet come out of Galilee."

"Do not some affirm," said Judith, "that he is of Bethlehem? Perchance, Zadok, he may yet be found to be of Judea."

"Yea, daughter, perchance."

"The rumor concerning the origin at Bethlehem comes," said Onias, "doubtless from this, that he was born there at what time his parents were gone up to the enrolment in the days of Quirinius; for this Jesus,—unless indeed all be false,—is he who was hailed King of the Jews by the Magians of Arabia, in the reign of Herod the Great; of whose strange birth all Israel heard, but afterward<sup>d</sup> heard no more."

"We all remember the tale," said Shammai, "to have been told to us, and some of us, Zadok, can remember through our own hearing."



"I number, Shammai, but forty years, and know nothing thereof."

"But where," asked Shammai, "has this youth concealed himself during the years since the time of his birth?"

"As I learned at Bethabara," Onias replied, "he hath dwelt in Nazareth, save that at the feasts he hath ever gone up to Jerusalem, carefully observing the Law. But this is affirmed also, that he is of the family and lineage of David."

"That," said Shammai, "will place him above John in his hopes of a ready reception, for John could not claim as much. Yet we hear that the disciples of John contend, that the voice pointed to their master as the Son of God, rather than Jesus; the name of neither having been pronounced."

"So," replied Onias, "it happened; for although John said at the first of himself, that he was but the herald of one greater, and so declares to this day, his followers scruple not to believe and declare that he himself is that greater. And this notwithstanding also the plainness with which the Baptist hath announced Jesus as a Prophet above all, even he who should come."

Said Zadok, "Verily Onias, thy words seem as of one who is ready to believe these things himself. Hast thou too been baptized in Jordan?"

"Jest not, Zadok," replied thy brother, "with things that may be of God. The times are full of dread. I am, as thou well knowest, as you all know, firmly bound to Herod; but Herod is not God, nor hath God spoken as yet by him. Wherever and whenever I shall hear, or believe I hear the voice of God, and behold the signs that

shall show his presence and power, there shall I be to listen and obey. In John I have beheld them not, yet is he a man of God. He is not the hope of Israel, though the spirit of God may rest upon him. But what can we yet say of Jesus? If the eyes and ears of men have not been blinded or deceived by the powers of darkness, then hath the God of our nation spoken. The multitudes of Bethabara doubt not that he has. The heavenly signs were not to be mistaken, they affirm. Yet, as I judge, we know not enough in this either to affirm or deny. The power of invisible spirits, and of the angels who fell we know not. It may be a delusion of Satan. Let us wait to see more. We must know him and hear him. It must reasonably give pause to us and to all, that Jesus has already withdrawn from sight, plunging immediately into the secret places of the mountain deserts. But, Zadok, while it may be that God hath indeed descended among us, and has at length revisited his people by the prophet whom long since he promised, it becometh all his children to bow in reverence and wait his will."

Zadok, far from being moved by what Onias had said with his air of deep sincerity, was evidently laboring, while he spoke, to suppress his scorn and contempt. His eye, the while, was fired with the inward passion, and his lip curled with derision. He was about to speak, but Shammai interposed ;—

"Onias, Zadok, is right ; and such should be our teaching at the synagogue. The prophets have foreshown, that Messiah shall in these days reveal himself, but they have not said with what form he shall come, with what signs he shall be announced, nor how attended. The thoughts and ways of Jehovah are not as ours. When

he appeared of old to his servant, he was not in the fire, nor in the whirlwind, but in the small voice. So if we would be prudent shall we say it may be now. The people look for one coming in the pomp and circumstance of a Prince, so that every eye shall confess him as there, or there, or here; but perchance they may misjudge the trappings of a true Prince. A Prince and King he certainly will be; he who is to come is truly to be the deliverer of Israel; but where shall be the hiding of his power, and what the instruments he shall use, and what the raiment he shall wear, and the ensigns of his dignity, who may dare to say?"

"The Ruler hath spoken what is right," cried many voices of those who were crowded around, intently listening. "Let us wait and see," exclaimed others. "If Jesus is the Son of David, we shall soon behold him on his throne; that will show him."

"And if he is Beelzebub's minister, as he seemeth, by this seeking the desert places, we shall see him no more; he hath already gone back to his master;" cried Zadok's shrieking voice.

With these words and other discourse which followed, Shammai, Zadok, and those who had accompanied them, took leave and departed from the city.

Thus, my mother, are we, as I have said, already arrested in our affairs. As the thoughts of all are swallowed up by the strangeness of these events, and are not to be diverted from them, we are compelled to give way and remain inactive—so far are we determined in our course by the events and circumstances themselves. Obeying, therefore, the counsel of Onias, and the neces-

sity of things also, I went not to Tiberias, but despatched Ziba instead bearing letters to Herod.

I send this, my mother, at the moment I have written it, that you may receive early knowledge of the wonderful things that have happened.

## XVI.

THE day following that on which I last wrote, I sought the streets of Beth-Harem, both that I might learn what more there was to be known concerning Jesus, and that I might visit again the leper and his daughter, whom I had seen before my journey to Machærus, but whom since that period I had committed to the care of Judith. Of their welfare she has often assured me; for though she herself, partaking of the common feelings of the disease, has seen them but once, yet has she bestowed upon them many gifts and kindnesses through her servants.

It was not difficult to perceive on the way to the city, but especially in the streets whichever way one turned, that some events had occurred, by which the minds of the people were much disturbed. They were everywhere gathered together conversing with earnestness, and either inquiring for news or imparting it. At the market place I found not only those, who are accustomed to pass there the greater portion of the time, which they know not otherwise how to rid themselves of, but many others of the chief persons of the city and neighboring country. John and Jesus were the names upon the lips of all. I approached one who sold fruits, with whom several were conversing. As I tasted his grapes, some of which I desired to purchase for the leper and his

daughter, and listened to those who were talking, the countryman addressed me, saying, "What think you, Sir; shall we hear anything more of this Jesus of Bethabara?"

I said that I could have no opinion worth repeating, as I had heard so little; nor indeed could any, as so little had been seen or was known of him.

"Not much, in truth," he replied, "is known of Jesus; but of John much is known, and he has borne his testimony to Jesus; and if any one should be believed, surely it is John, whom all who know, know to be honest."

I said I had never heard John nor seen him; but the reports, that had been brought to me, were in his favor. But how should he know anything of Jesus?

"How," said one who stood by, "should a prophet know anything, but by the power of God?"

"But how," I asked, willing to know their opinion, "do men know John to be a prophet, he has wrought no miracle that I have heard?"

"That is very true," replied the countryman, "but did he not constantly prophecy of the coming of one after him, whom the people knew nothing of, but who would one day reveal himself; and has he not now come? He is surely shown to be a prophet, for his prophecy has come to pass."

"If, as you judge, he prophesied the coming of the Messiah," I replied, "is it not too early to say that the prophecy is fulfilled? since we know not as yet, that Jesus is he, and surely the manner of his appearing makes not much for him."

"I do not know," replied the other, "why we should

look for everything at once. He indeed appears as other men, so we are told, but what say you to the voice, and the heavens opened? Are not these somewhat?"

"If those things," I answered, "indeed happened as has been related, they do truly declare that God is with Jesus or John, whichever was pointed out by the voice, but surely they make neither to be the Messiah."

"That, indeed, is true as you say," rejoined the other, "but then to one who is ready to believe, it makes it so likely, that it seems to be almost or quite enough of itself."

"Ah! you foolish people," cried Zadok's voice from behind me, "stand ready to believe everything. If one were to hearken to you, Christ comes every day. For no sooner doth a man look or speak differently from others, than behold you cry out, Here is Christ! Verily ye will yet be the cause, that the Romans will suck us dry as the Jordan in the month Ab, and grind us to powder, fine as dust of Arabia. It is a pity that for the sake of Judea your mouth could not be stopped and your hands tied."

"That they would be I am sure," rejoined the other nothing daunted, "if you scribes had the power you wish you had. But happily you have it not. Had you dared, John had long ago been put out of the way; but while the people are for him, it is more than you dare attempt, even with Herod on your side."

"Whether we dare or not," cried Zadok, already inflamed with passion, "you shall see betimes. John's days, mark me, my young rustic, John's days are already numbered! and so would I say are those of Jesus, but that he has already betaken himself back



again to his master. What can you look for from such as these? Idiots, fools, asses, that ye all are." And he turned away in a rage.

"There's a Pharisee, for you! There's a ruler of a synagogue!—there's a man of the Law for you," cried the countryman. "It is much more likely such as he, thick enough here, but thicker yet as we hear in Jerusalem, will themselves bring the country to nought. If Christ came in the very form of God, would they not believe him, if in their conceit he ought not so to have come. Though the heart were soft as a ripe fig, it were better than to be as hard as a mill-stone.—These, Sir, not those, are my best grapes. Try these.—But we spoke just now of John. I have seen him and heard him many a time in the villages just above here, and to see him and to hear him is to believe him trustworthy. The marks of honesty are in his face and voice."

"But," said I, "so strange is his appearance, that many scruple not to say that he is possessed."

"It is said," rejoined the other, "by those who wish him ill. He is but like other country folks—save in his wisdom which is that of a Prophet. They will say some just such thing of Jesus, I warrant you, should he prove what we hope. But they will truly both fare ill, if Zadok and such as he become inflamed against them. They say already, that he has done much to set Herod against John, reporting carefully whatever he says against either him, or Herodias. But the counsels of such a man cannot prevail. God will confound them."

"All the Pharisees," I said, "are not like Zadok."

"Most are," interrupted the other.

"It may be so," I answered, "for I am but lately come

into Judea; but all are not like him. Onias, whom doubtless thou knowest, is willing to wait and see. Shammai"—

"Shammai," responded the other, "is a Sadducee."

"I do not think so," I answered, "though many so report him."

"It matters little what he is," replied the seller of fruit, "whether Sadducee or Pharisee, he is something better than either, a good and a just and a kind-hearted man. He would let every man have his way, provided he would injure no one. But for these others, if you so much as choke a little at swallowing down whole all they swallow with throats they have spent their lives in stretching, you are out of the synagogue, or up before the council ere your eye can wink."

I would willingly have talked longer with this man, but that purchasers, happily for him, thickened about him, so that I was compelled to turn away. In all parts of the Market Place and in the neighborhood of the synagogue from which those were just coming, who—as with us—had been present at the morning prayers, I found the same topics in the mouths of all. None, so far as I could learn, save a few violent as Zadok, were disposed to deny the reality of the voice and the heavenly light at the Baptism of Jesus; and few, putting together with that, what was now generally received, that Jesus is the same whose birth was marked by the like prodigies many years ago, hesitate to believe that he is indeed the promised and expected Deliverer. Many are so wrought upon, that language does not suffice to convey their confident belief, but they give expression to it by loud and passionate cries, by gestures, and by a counte-

nance which in every feature utters the sentiments of the heart. The children in the streets have also caught the joy from the elders, and cry out in their shrill voices, "Christ is come! Christ is come!" His concealment since the baptism they explain some one way and some another, but it hinders not the current of their joy. They doubt not he will soon reappear and show himself more fully. The news having been carried already not only into all the country round about Bethabara and the Jordan, but even to Jerusalem, great numbers have flocked together to learn the tidings in the very neighborhood of the places, that have become so signalized, or at least where, as in Beth-Harem, many may be met, who have seen or conversed at least with some who were present at the baptism, and witnessed the wonder. Every eye seemed to glisten with joy, every mouth was full and overflowing with words of congratulation and hope. "Christ is come! Christ is come!" fell upon the ear at every turn.

As I parted from these crowds and was passing by the great gates of the citadel, I encountered Saturninus. Saluting each other, at his invitation I entered his quarters. As the gates unfolded and I passed beneath the arched way, leading to the inner square, the clash of arms fell upon my ear, and the voices of those who issued commands.

"It is but the soldiers at their exercise," said the Centurion, "a sight and sounds that must be familiar to you as a Roman."

I said that "often, even from my youth, had I taken delight in witnessing at the Prætorian Camp the exercises of the soldiers, and then used to lament that nature

had made me not a Roman but a Jew, whereby I was shut out from what seemed to me the chief avenue to glory."

"Thy birth did not hinder thee from serving," said Saturninus. "The camp opens its arms to all who will swear fealty to Rome."

"That," I answered, "neither my mother—nor in truth, my father, would suffer me to do; and when early youth was passed—that, I would not do myself. I loved Rome and Roman ways, but still I remembered I was a Jew. Now I think every way differently.—But for thyself, Saturninus, having so many times rioted in the field of battle, this must be a wearisome task, set here in the heart of Asia to watch mutinous Jews. Time must move with leaden wings."

"Many things prevent that," he replied. "I no longer love war for its own sake, as I am obliged to say I once did. I willingly greet the quietness and repose I find here. And to speak the honest truth I love your people. Of late years I have studied philosophy more than the science and art of war; I oftener when liberty is mine take up a book than the sword; I converse with those who give proof that they have souls and desires, rather than with those who only seem as if they were a clod of earth, a little more animated than what lies wholly dead, and the ploughshare turns over. I find among this people curious subjects of inquiry, singular specimens of our race, and a love of thoughts which go beyond the confines of the senses, higher or deeper, than among any other I have known. Especially have I been instructed by reading your sacred books, where I have found a religion worthy altogether, or almost, of

both the great God and of man his creature. So that with such tastes, and inclinations, Julian, thou seest I am not likely to pass the time heavily. Besides these things I need not to thee speak of the house of Onias."

"Thou needest not. The sun ever shines in the dwelling of Onias. And to dwell in sunlight is all we can ask.—But say, how long doth Pilate continue your guard in Beth-Harem? Is he still apprehensive that the Jew Julian will raise new disturbances?"

Saturninus laughed. "It is little, I believe, that he fears," said he, "either from thee or Onias. But I need not, or ought not to say, why he occupies Beth-Harem."

"Let me," I said, "draw no secret from an enemy."

"Whatever brought me here, however," resumed the Centurion, "there seems of late to be growing up reasons enough for my remaining; and so, I suppose, must I report to Pilate."

"And what are these new reasons?" I asked, "if they be not also of a secret nature."

"Oh, no;" he answered, "these I may communicate. They have existed but for a few days.—It seems from all I can learn that some long-expected person, whom they call Christ, has made his appearance on the Jordan, from whom great actions are looked for, such as the rescue of Judea from Rome, and the like. So I hear at least on every side. Ominous and threatening words are thrown out as I pass along, or as the people look on the soldiers at their exercises. The young urchins, who are thickest about our tents, have caught the song and cry out, 'Take care, Romans, Christ is come.' 'Now for Israel, down with the Romans.'

What the true sense is I know not. I take no other note of it than to hear the words, and ponder them."

I only said in reply, that I knew well whereof he spoke, but that truth in the matter was difficult of access on account of the contradictory nature of the rumors which were abroad, as well as many groundless superstitions cherished by the lower orders of the people.

Saturninus now led me from where we had sat into the midst of the soldiers whom I beheld, some shooting with the arrow at a mark, others throwing the lance, others attacking and defending with shield and sword, and others exercising with the gloves of the gladiator, so bringing into the most complete and violent action every part of the body. When I had sufficiently surveyed these, and had enjoyed further conversation with the Centurion, I left the citadel, and bent my steps toward the dwelling of the leper.

I soon reached the place, which seemed to me even more desolate and wretched than when I first saw it. It had the appearance of the ruins of extensive prisons, which had been destroyed by assault or by fire; the remains of which were permitted to stand as they had been left by the fiery element or by war, serving as a shelter for domestic animals of every kind, from the occasional violence of the weather, and in its better apartments, as a home for some poor outcasts, such as the leper and his daughter. As I stood at the entrance a moment, considering the hard fate of those who were compelled to seek the protection of so gloomy and comfortless a dwelling, one joined me, who seemed from his wretched garments and neglected aspect, as if he too was of its inhabitants. He bore the marks of extreme

poverty, but not of the misery that commonly accompanies it; nor was he afflicted by disease, unless that may be called disease which follows the use of such drinks as cause drunkenness, and leaves its marks in the eye, and on the skin. But save this he was of a cheerful look, and seemed from his gait and manner as if he were rather a prince, or a princely merchant, than a beggar. He saluted me with great courtesy, and asked to join my company. "Observing," he said, "that I was a stranger to this part of Beth-Harem, he would give me such information as I appeared to be ignorant of concerning the ruins."

I said that I was truly a stranger and should value all he could tell me.

He then went on to relate the fortunes of the building from its origin, down to the wars of Antiochus and the Maccabees, when it was destroyed by the soldiers of the king, and from that time had been suffered to stand as we now beheld it; and so strongly had it been built at first, that the elements passed over it without removing so much as a stone. "It now," he ended with saying, "has become the happy residence of some such as himself raised by fortune above the wants of life."

I said that on the contrary he seemed to me to be a person subject to some of its sharpest wants.

"The eye," said he, "is a great deceiver; it sees not far. There are those who seem as Princes in Beth-Harem, who are nevertheless slaves; and those who shine in gold who are beggars, while I am free of all men, and have, seeming to possess nothing, more than I can use. Having no possessions, and few wants or

none, I have no cares. The day is mine from the first hour to the last, to pass it as I may, not fearing the demand of any upon either my time or my labor. In truth I know not labor, and of time I take no account, but as it brings about the seasons of eating, drinking, and sleeping. Who then in Beth-Harem so happy as I? I have but to speak a word, and my wants, such as they are, are supplied. God watcheth over the earth, and the people of Beth-Harem over me."

"Yet your dwelling is miserable," said I, "and your garments are but filthy rags; a little labor would provide better things than these."

"My garments," he replied, "are indeed but rags; but then they cover me, and they cost me no care. Why should I be anxious for more? And for my dwelling, come and see it."

I said that I would trust to his word. I had come to see the leper and his daughter. I would now enter and seek for them.

"Ah," said he, "you speak of the merchant of Tyre; he is not now in his apartment. He is abroad enjoying the city. He will return at the sixth hour. Meanwhile come and see how the better sort of the inhabitants of Beth-Harem dwell."

So saying he led the way into the buildings, I following. He passed through dark and ruined arches, and desolate and uninhabited apartments, out of which, as their den, half-famished dogs fled howling at our approach. Into these arched ways and rooms light sometimes came through the broken roof, or narrow chinks in the walls defended and half obscured by bars of iron.



We soon stopped at the door of a room, like others we had passed through, and then entered.

"This," said my guide, "is my home. This straw is my bed, and, as you see, it is all I have. I need no more. The High-Priest at Jerusalem tastes not such sleep as I. The world is troubled about Pilate and Herod, Jesus and John; but it all passes by me as the air which I cannot hear or see."

As he spoke, I heard not far from us the clank of chains, and the voice, low and wailing, as of one who sang, or wept and complained. I asked its meaning. He said it is one who is beside himself, and held in bondage for both his own and others' safety. "Let us go to him. Devils possess him wholly."

We went in the direction of the sound.

We found the room of the possessed person much like the others I had seen, of solid stone, dropping with moisture. A little light streamed in from a small opening, and fell upon the spot where he sat. It showed him to us bound hand and foot with strong chains to the wall against which he leaned. He was naked, but as if revisited suddenly by a dim recollection of former days, he drew together the straw about him as he beheld us approaching, and held down his head. The long matted hair fell over it, and wholly concealed him from our view. Presently he raised his head by stealth and gazed upon us, and then spoke in a low tone and as if afraid, saying, "who are you and why do you come here?"

"That," said my companion, "was himself that spoke; so his own voice ever is, low and sorrowful."

"If you can help me," said the possessed again, "help me now, quick, while the keepers are gone. They will

be back anon, and then you can do nothing. Wonderful it is how you stand still, your hands playing with your robe, and help me not! why do you who are a Jew wear a Roman dress? but come, hasten and set me free. Do I not tell you my masters will soon be back—oh fools and satans they are coming—I hear them”—saying which he trembled and sunk his head again upon his bosom clasping over it his chained hands.

In a moment more, and his hands fell from over his head, he looked fiercely up as if he had suddenly changed to another person, his voice became shrill and wild, as he laughed loud and said,

“Art thou Uzzi? Canst thou do more than Pharez? never believe it. Thou canst never drive us out. Here we are and here we mean to dwell; it is a good dwelling and we will not leave it. Pharez has tried all his art, but thou seest we are yet here—we are three, he is one. Our master too is on our side; what canst thou do? Let us alone and begone.” “Nay, nay,” said he after a long pause, in his other voice, and as if afraid of being overheard, “do not go, stay awhile, and they will all be gone, and then you can help me; and for all you do for me I can enrich you more than your hearts can conceive, for,—I tell it to you as a secret—I know where all the treasures of Solomon are hid, and you shall share them. In truth,” he whispered, “I am his son.”

“We cannot help you,” said my companion, “neither can Pharez or Uzzi, but Christ you know is come, and it will be his business to overthrow the kingdom of devils; he will drive them out.”

“Christ! Christ!” shrieked the possessed, “he is not come; and if he were we fear him not. Our master is

as strong as he. This body is our house, and neither John nor Jesus can shut us out. Here we reign and here shall do as we will"—“Ah help me now,” cried the miserable man, in his low and alarmed tones, “they are about to torment me. Now they thrust their fangs into my vitals and tear them.” Saying this he cried out as if in torment, his body was convulsed throughout, and he fell down among his chains and straw as one dead.

“Now he is at his ease,” said my conductor, “therefore let us leave him. He will lie so for many hours, as if he were indeed dead, save that his limbs continue thus wrenched and awry, and that his mouth foams. But when he awakes he evermore avers that he hath only slept. So that we are much alike, he and I. He eats, drinks, and sleeps, and so do I. We differ but in this, that his food is brought to him, while I must needs seek mine over Beth-Harem. We are alike in life; and death is the same to all.—Now I hear the merchant in his apartment. Let us seek him.”

I found the merchant, as my new companion chose to call him, in the same place as before, but made a greatly more comfortable residence by the kind offices of Judith. The leper and his daughter were rejoiced to see me again, and were loud in their expression of thanks for what through me had been bestowed upon them.

“My little Ruth,” said the leper, “has not ceased to speak your praises and those of the good daughter of Onias. The poor child will never hear her own praises, I fear, save from me alone.” Ruth seemed troubled that her father had spoken thus, and turned away her face. I said that, “they who were conscious of doing what God enjoins can spare the praises of man.”

The girl looked again towards me, and expressed pleasure in her beaming eyes.

I then said to the leper that I had, on my late journey to Machærus, seen those whom I supposed to be his brother and his family, and gave an account of what had happened.

He said, he supposed that I "had indeed seen them, for the place agreed with what he had been told. But for him, alas! but for him my Ruth would have been as a princess of Tyre. Who among her thousand merchants could count so many ships as I? Who was so observed in the streets and in the market and in the synagogue? Whose wealth poured in in so many streams with channels so deep? All men honored me, and the foundations of my prosperity seemed deep as the roots of Lebanon. In one night it all vanished as a dream, and my Ruth is all that is left; yet she is worth more than all."

"Speak not thus, my father," said the girl, "nor ever think of Tyre. God hath smitten us and afflicted us, but the smiling of prosperity might have been worse. David says that afflictions are good. This I know, that if it be to them that we owe our present peace, then are they not evil—not worst. If one might have prosperity and peace therewith, that indeed were better. But if they must needs be divided then to us has fallen the better part."

"True, my child, and what we now have we cannot, as riches, lose, and so our happiness is secure."

"The fear of God may depart from us," said Ruth.

"Then, indeed," said the parent, "all were lost! But it will not; from thee it cannot depart, from me it shall

not. I may depart, but while I have my breath I will fear God and serve him. Yet but for thee, my daughter, I would I were in Abraham's bosom. Why do I live?"

The girl wept. The father continued,

"Yet who would defend thee from the rude and the wicked, were I away? I must not die, Ruth. It is hard either way. I would die and I would not. I would live and I would not. While I talk thus, do I not seem to forget the providence of God? It matters not, it matters not, my child, whether I live or die. God will shield thee. None can withstand him. Thou wilt be safe putting thy trust in him."

The old man seemed to have forgotten that any one was present beside themselves; while therefore the girl continued weeping, I said, that the providence of God was in truth always sufficient, and that they who put their trust in it would never be forsaken, they would have that peace which surpassed all other blessings. But his daughter should not want also for earthly friends. While I lived and the daughter of Onias, she should be cared for, and defended, nor should the shadow of an evil fall on her, which human force could turn aside.

"Now the Lord bless thee," cried the leper, "and give thee peace; it was but this I wanted. Now, O Lord, even now, would I be at rest. As thy righteous servant Job, by reason of his sore distresses desired death rather than life, so too does thy servant before thee; mine eyes are darkened, my skin is foul and horrid to the sight, my feet are eaten away; and of him, who was once as a shaft of polished marble, nothing now remaineth but a loathsome and dismembered trunk. When the morning comes, I say, would to God it were

evening, and when it is evening, I say would to God it were morning. Day and night they are both alike to me, and both are vanity. Why should I live?"

"Do I love thee less, my father," cried his daughter, beautiful in her tears, "that thy skin is rough and thy eyes and feet are gone? It is thee I love, not thy limbs; and were it that thy prayer were answered, where should I go, and whom on earth should I love? I know, alas, thy memory goes back to other and better days; but I have known thee only as now, and only thee. Pray not for death, or, else that I may die with thee."

Again the young girl was overcome by her grief.

My companion, who had hitherto remained silent, now spoke.

"Lose not thy courage, my old neighbor," said he; "thy lot is not dark as thou thinkest. I complain not of life, nor of death, of God, nor of man. Yet how do we greatly differ? I have eyes, indeed, but I use them not. I have feet but they serve me not, save to move me hence to the market place and thence back again. I have a skin, not beautiful, not either indeed scaly with leprosy, yet it profits me not. Who loves me the better for the things in which I surpass thee? Who loves Zadok, the Pharisee, though of limbs and senses he wanteth not one? Would thy young daughter exchange thee for Zadok? What profit is there in that which profiteth not? Thy rest is better for thyself and the world than another man's motion; thy blindness than another man's sight, thy ugliness than another's beauty, thy poverty than another's wealth. Riches and beauty do but corrupt, and labor does but weary. I am happier

than any man in Beth-Harem, save mayhap the wise Shammai. But thou shouldst be happy as I. Thy daughter should be to thee as a sun to warm thee, and a light shining deeper than thine eyes, even on thy heart."

With these words he waved his rags with a majestic movement, and looked toward me for applause with a countenance in which jest and seriousness seemed strangely contending. His speech brought a smile on the faces of the unhappy leper and his daughter, and though they might little agree with what he had said, it had the good effect of changing the current of their thoughts and lightening their sorrow.

"Whatever thanks," said the leper, "we may owe to the people of Beth-Harem, who remember the poor and feed them with bread, we owe none more than this our friend and neighbor, who many a time hath not only divided his loaf with us, but much more always cheers our sorrows by his merry voice, and by his sayings, which if they agree not always with Moses and the Prophets, show themselves true by causing the hearers either to laugh or weep. Had death"—

"Talk no longer," cried the beggar, "of dying. These are the days to live. Who knows upon whom the honors of the new kingdom may fall? Under King John or King Jesus, I may rise to power, and when I do, thou shalt. I will not forget old friends in my new glory."

Being interrupted here by a wild and piercing shriek from the room of the possessed man, the beggar hastily withdrew, saying "that he must look to the wants and welfare of his other neighbor, for that after his long sleep he needed both food and drink."

I also took leave of the leper and his daughter, after having again given them every needed promise, that I would not forsake them, and that in Judith, Ruth should ever find one who would protect her. The old man, by such repeated assurances, was made to forget the evils of his lot in the benefits which he could still enumerate, and returned to that contentment of spirit, which his daughter assures me is the usual condition of his mind.

Returning again through the midst of the city, I found the people still anxious and inquisitive as before concerning the reports from Bethabara. Nothing more, however, could I learn in which trust could be placed, save that by those who this day had come from thence had been confirmed what was said at first by Onias, that Jesus had disappeared among the fastnesses of the wilderness to the east of the Jordan, and had been seen by none since the baptism.

When I again saw Judith, and had related to her my conversation with the inhabitants of the Old Prison, she said, that a dwelling which she had caused to be prepared for the leper was now ready, to which he might soon be removed. Although the apartment they now occupied had been made more secure than before, against the elements, by the labors of those whom Judith had employed, and had become a more agreeable residence than any other part of the ruins, still I was glad to learn that another and better was procured, and no time was lost in removing them from the one to the other. The beggar I hoped would take possession of the room which the Tyrian merchant had abandoned, but he could not be



persuaded to do so much as only to change the direction of his steps to reach it. It were undergoing, he thought, needless labor. "Besides," said he, "why should I change that with which I am already satisfied, for another thing with which, truly, you and others may be better pleased, but which has no new charms for me. I have but three wants, food, drink, and a place where I may lie and sleep. Food is food, drink is drink, and sleep is sleep. I see not why I were better to take my lettuce and figs from a silver dish, my wine from a golden cup, my sleep on a silken couch—the nature of the fig, the wine, and of sleep is still the same. It asks none of these additions for the poor man to receive both pleasure and nutriment from his food and his repose. In this God is seen to be merciful and equal. Good wine tastes no better to Herod than to a beggar, and honey is not sweeter to Pilate than to me. The life here, moreover, being thus alike to each, dost thou judge that Herod will find more favor in the life to come than the Beggar of Beth-Harem? Verily, I should stand forth boldly at his side in the day of judgment, nay, betwixt him and Pilate, nor be afraid."

So that he cleaves to his straw, his wet and dripping walls, his wretched den, into which, through the cavities where doors and windows once were, dogs enter to sleep by his side, or to devour the food they have stolen, causing oftentimes the vacant halls and winding passages to resound with their frightful howlings as they pursue each other, and fight for the morsel which is to save those who conquer from death, or griping hunger.

Judith now often resorts to the dwelling of the leper, where she beholds its tenants enjoying greatly every

addition that has been made to their comfort. In Ruth she discovers one in whom a spirit dwells of so much native excellence, that none of the base conditions of extreme poverty and adversity have had power to bring any stain upon it. Her father's judgment of her she finds to be true when he said, that she was too pure for the touch of leprosy to harm her. On such occasions I often accompany her, and beneath this roof of poverty have I passed many of the most agreeable hours, and most instructive also, since I have dwelt in these regions. For the leper, now that he is at rest, sitting beneath a roof which is secured to him, his daughter rescued from the dangers that had ever hitherto surrounded her, returns to the feelings and thoughts of his earlier life, and shows himself not only a devout lover of the Law and worshipper of God, but a man who has known much of the ways of the world, whose mind has drawn knowledge from many quarters, and in his adversities has possessed power to retain what he had gained, if not to increase its stores. His conversation is that of one both devout and wise, and his daughter, who possesses from nature larger and better gifts than the father, and has received in addition, all that he could teach,—for all his happiness these many years has come from the instruction, which by conversation he could thus impart—proves also a new source of pleasure, not to Judith only, but to Onias and myself also. Happier circumstances, the society of those who are her equals, comparative plenty, with friendship, have daily called out new expressions on her countenance, and shown new beauties and graces of mind and heart, by which we have been astonished and delighted. She has al

ready become more necessary to our happiness than we are to hers.

Nothing in addition for many days has been heard of Jesus, and the people grow despondent. Many will not believe that anything like what has been asserted has happened. But while the eyes and ears of men are as they were made, and devils do not enter us to pervert what the senses would convey, then doubtless, they say, that took place which has been affirmed, whether or not Jesus is heard of again. Surely, never was there a time when a whole people were thus waiting to receive with acclamations of welcome a promised deliverer, which of itself seems to show, that if God be about to send forth a prophet, he will now appear, or having appeared he will return. All are ready to bear him up, and on, to every honor. Every heart is beating with hope, every hand waits but the word to grasp the sword or the spear. I cannot doubt that whatsoever may be the reason of his tarrying, the delay will not be long. Peace be with thee.

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While Jesus, for reasons which then were not understood, but which have since been declared, thus withdrew himself from the scene where he had first made himself known, and from the great length of the time, during which he remained hidden from the eyes and the knowledge of the people, it was believed by many that he would not return, Herod again deemed it a favorable time to continue the preparations he had made, and strengthen his cause among the people. No letters can

I discover written during this period, but my recollection of those days is distinct of much intercourse with Herod by letters, by messengers, and by visits at Machærus. The Tetrarch was sure that no more would ever be heard of Jesus; and although he would not with clearness declare all that he had done, yet he darkly shadowed forth in obscure phrases, which he loves to use, that an emissary from him had sought and found Jesus during his retreat into the wilderness, and had become convinced that he was not what he was at first believed to be, and that nothing need be feared or hoped from him. The proffer of honor, and wealth, and power, even to that of half the kingdom, nay, the supreme power, which was freely made if he would join with Herod,—made in the belief that he was a prophet and endowed with powers more than human,—he would not accept; and doubtless because he did not in truth possess such powers, for upon being earnestly pressed to give some proof thereof, he complied not, but steadfastly refused. Had he in truth possessed them, Herod was sure that he would have given some token; for no one who came to fill the office of Messiah would spurn the offers which he had made, since they were those of a strict alliance with him for a prosecution of the self-same ends and objects, which he as the deliverer must have had in view.

These reasonings of Herod, however, especially taken together with the fact, that a messenger of his had found Jesus and conversed with him, only served to convince Onias and the rest of his firmest adherents, that it were wiser to delay the contemplated movements yet a little longer. His inquiries had settled

what before all were doubtful about, namely, that Jesus was still alive and not very remote. It was clear that none would consent to resume their undertaking until he had been again seen, and his character and purpose determined.

The Tetrarch was irritated by such opposition. He was confident in his own strength, and impatient of restraint and delay. But by much persuasion he was made to renounce all farther purpose of action, till the minds of the people should be quieted by the confirmation or defeat of their hopes.

## XVII.

At length, my mother, after long waiting, and when the people had nearly abandoned all hope of what they desired, Jesus hath again appeared, not as before on the Jordan, but far from us, in Galilee. At the same time that this news has been brought to our ears, we are told also of astonishing miracles which he has wrought in the towns and villages of that quarter. How shall I describe the amazement and joy that fill the minds of all! Every day and every hour are reports brought to our ears of new wonders he has done, and every day and hour doth the joy of the people rise higher and higher. No one doubts now that God has indeed visited his people. Great numbers not patient enough to wait for the time when Jesus shall visit other parts of the country, and doubtless among others, the valley of the Jordan, have flocked to Galilee, that they may at once remove their doubts, or invigorate their faith by themselves seeing and hearing the new prophet. All Beth-Harem is astir, and the synagogues, the streets, and house-tops resound with the praises of the worshippers, giving thanks for the great redemption that has drawn nigh. All Jerusalem also, so we hear, not less than the parts about us is moved, and multitudes have already resorted to Capernaum, and the shores of the lake of Galilee. We remain, for many reasons, on

the banks of the Jordan,—satisfied with the knowledge which we continually receive from such as are arriving and departing, and on whose truth and exactness we know that we can rely.

All that has reached us of the character and conduct of this prophet shows that, in respect of wisdom and a holy life, he is well worthy to be a messenger of God. But what his purposes truly are, we cannot pretend as yet to determine. I say that we cannot. For ourselves, who have so espoused the cause of Herod, we cannot hastily nor without the strongest reasons abandon it for another. To him, who should appear and afford proof sufficient by the signs he gave that he was the Messiah of God, should we without hesitation or delay transfer ourselves. But no such signs have as yet been given. In the mean time we remain steadfast to him who seems well able to accomplish all the objects, or the greatest which are expected of that personage; nor do we think it an event to be looked for from present appearances, that Jesus will show himself more than a prophet; yet we cannot tell. Though we cannot quite share the excessive transports of the people, we hold ourselves silent, and attentive to what shall come to pass. We are filled with amazement at what we hear, and pretend not to say what shall, or what shall not be the issue. As surely as the presence of God was manifested of old by Moses and Elijah, so surely is it now, by Jesus. Of this all see the evidence, Pharisee and Sadducee, Jew and Samaritan.

Judith is made happy beyond all others, as it seems to me, by this coming of Jesus, and by the things we

every day hear concerning him and his teachings and his works. She will not doubt that he will prove all we can desire, and hardly can she be restrained from journeying to Galilee, that she may herself hear, see, and judge. But though she cannot see and listen for herself, she can scarce converse of any other subject.

"Ah, Julian," said she, as we were lately seated on the house-top as the day was declining, "how glad I am that anything has happened to separate you, even though but for a season, and in part from that bad man."

"And whom do you mean, my cousin?" said I.

"Could I mean any one," she replied, "besides Herod?"

"He is not perfect," said I, "yet as God works his designs by storms, pestilence, and whirlwinds, so may he by demons and bad men."

"I believe," replied Judith, "that he does indeed use men's wickedness for some ends, so that even from this, the darkest evil, somewhat beneficial springs. But who can believe, that for his Messiah, promised so long, a man like Herod would be chosen?"

"None of the wise men of Israel," I answered, "can tell me, nor have I been able from any quarter to learn with certainty what sort of a personage the looked-for Messiah is to be. Some say he is to be a prophet, and some a king, and some both; and besides these a priest. The only thing in which they agree is, that he is to be a conqueror, and deliver Israel from her slavery. I know not therefore what to make of him with exactness. But if the only belief in which they unite is any guide, then is there some good reason for thinking well of Herod, seeing that already he stands so that with but little doubt



he may work out the deliverance of Judea. Though we should not judge him Messiah, why may we not judge of him as one who may avail, like the Maccabees, to save our land from the spoiler?"

"You do not then, Julian, believe Herod to be the Christ."

"To confess the truth," I replied, "I do not. I believe he may do great good to Judea; that he stands with his harness on, ready, if the people will aid him, to accomplish the very work which by all is looked for from the Messiah; but I do not believe he is therefore that person. I will give him my service as a Jew, as I would enlist under a general in the Roman camp; but no more.

"I joy to find it is so," said Judith; "I too may believe as much; though to speak to you a truth, which were it spoken in Beth-Harem or Jerusalem would bring down heavy judgments, I verily think that under Rome we enjoy as much of both freedom and peace, as we should do under princes of our own—as we should were Herod king of Israel, instead of Tiberius and Pilate. Ah, I should tremble, were Herod king. I have seen him once, and once has he spoken to me. But I would not think of that. Others, however, though not yourself, believe him Messiah!—a man spotted with many crimes, and who will be with many more; a man both crafty and cruel—a fox and a tiger. I wonder at the delusion, and above all, that Onias should have bound himself by so many ties to him."

"Onias," I replied, "like most of our people, is ruled by one idea, and one hope, the deliverance of Judea; and after many disappointments, after waiting so long in vain

for the coming of the prince who was to work out the deliverance, and beholding no signs of his approach, notwithstanding that, according to the interpretation of our rabbis and priests, the time has more than arrived, when, if prophecy be more than a fable, he ought to arise, it surely is not surprising, that he should be willing to fall back upon Herod, in whom it must be confessed by the most hostile, there are centered many of the claims which would characterize the Messiah. For myself, I marvel that greater numbers, ere this, have not sought to him as their only hope. Even the Herodians themselves are many of them but lukewarm adherents, especially those of Cæsarea, who seem to be content with their present relations to him and his opinions and customs, and doubt the wisdom of the attempt now in hand. In truth it was only among the smaller portion of them, that the Tetrarch, with all his secret endeavors, had succeeded in planting the seeds of a firm faith in his pretensions. But no other so sure hope can I discern in the wide future for Israel, as that which at this moment rests on Herod."

"Can you," asked Judith, "see none in Jesus? Surely the seal of Jehovah is upon him."

"I know not at present," I replied, "what nor who he is, nor what he will prove. I have with sincerity sworn allegiance to Herod. I cannot at once, nor without better reasons than can as yet be given, transfer it to Jesus."

"But, Julian, can he whose baptism was marked by so great an event as the opened heavens, whose birth was announced by angels, and by whose power miracles have

been wrought in Galilee, great as ever came from a prophet's hand, be other than He for whom we look?"

Before I could answer Judith's question, Onias, with Shammai, Zadok, and other of our friends from Beth-Harem joined us.

"Ah, my daughter," said Shammai, as he placed himself by the side of Judith, "I am glad to see thee in these days of promise. Days, too, happily, that join in one those who differ. Even Zadok smiles now when I do."—

"Not quite as often, I trust, Shammai," he replied. "Were it so, I should scarce think myself in my place, at the synagogue, remembering what Solomon saith of laughter."

"Nay now, my brother," replied Shammai, "take me not up so sharply. I would only have said that at length Zadok and Shammai smiled at the same time and thing. I will grant that for once thou hast smiled, I have laughed an hundred times. But of what did you converse, daughter, with our young Roman as we came up!"

"Of what should it have been?" said Judith. "We converse now but of one and the same theme."

"Of Jesus you mean."

"Yes, of Jesus."

"It is, indeed, the only theme as thou hast said," replied Shammai. "In the city it is so; whether you meet in your walks those of one sect, employment, condition of life, or another, it is still the same words you hear from every mouth, and one hopeful eye you behold in every countenance. Even children and slaves have caught the general joy, and utter the name of the prophet

as if it were a charm to keep them from evil. And with reason."

"They are a foolish people," said Zadok, "and easily seduced as ever. I marvel, Shammai, that thou shouldst encourage them in their folly. They may soon have to sing another song."

"Why thou thyself," said the Ruler, "hast been little less stirred than I, by the news from Galilee. Why silence the song others would sing in their joy?"

"I rejoice," replied the other, "as one whose joy may speedily be turned into mourning. It is not impossible that Jesus may be the Christ. But what can we say more?"

"Surely," replied Shammai, "it is not certain that he now is, or that he will be; yet is there such a hope, as Israel was never before permitted to entertain, and in that hope let all be glad who will. Say you not so, my daughter?"

"Indeed I do, Rabbi. I had just said to Julian as you ascended and joined us, that it was no small token to us, that this Jesus of Galilee is the fulfilment of our hope, in that his birth was so announced, that at his baptism the very heavens were opened, and the voice of Jehovah, or of his angel, was heard, and that he hath power to do the works which are filling the land with astonishment. Who else should he be?"

"Could the voice of the whole land of Judea this moment be heard," replied Shammai, "it would say with thee, lady, who else should he be? The people are waiting and ready to hail him king, prophet, deliverer. Leaving every other ruler, they would now at his word flock together, and under his supremacy lay the deep

foundations of that kingdom of God of which there shall be no end. Yet, Judith, are there some things that cause a doubt."

"Yea, verily, that are there," said Zadok.

"But still," said Shammai, "none to extinguish hope."

"Wait for that," said Zadok, "until to-morrow."

"I will wait longer," said Shammai.

"I am ready," said Judith, "to believe even now; I see no room for doubt. The reports which have come to our ears are by the lips of those whom we know; why should I not believe?"

"Believe what, my child?" asked Shammai.

Judith hesitated; but said, after a moment's pause, "believe in him, as one whom God has sent to instruct us, and why not also to save us from our enemies? Messiah we are taught will be a prophet and priest, as well as king."

"Doubtless it is so," said the Ruler. "And it may not be denied that thus far Jesus has shown himself possessed of the wisdom of a prophet, and of the holiness of a priest; but no signs has he given of the greatness of a prince."

"Not," asked Judith, "in his miracles? Who should do a miracle but one who comes from God?—And is not every greatness his?"

"True, daughter, there are those who pretend to do wonders like these of Jesus, but a wise man receives them not. To God alone belongs such power. But surely it has been imparted to many who were not Messiah, and may be to many more. His works show God to be with this Jesus of Nazareth, but they show him not to be the Christ."

“Spoken like the King of Wisdom himself,” said Zadok. “Yet is there a remnant of folly to be rebuked. Works great as these of Jesus can Pharez do, and many a Magian and Egyptian besides. Who knows not that these have power to foretell things to come, to expel demons, to call forth spirits from the air, the ocean, and the grave? The sorceress of Endor has left those behind who can do her own deeds and more.”

“So,” replied Shammai, “do the ignorant believe, but so do not the wise. They are liars, deceivers, impostors all; and the people fools and blind, who put their trust in them. Who knows not how their tricks are done? even like unto those of her of Endor,—in the terrors of darkness and the night, in hollow caves of the earth, in tombs, and on blasted heaths, amidst sulphurous flames and burning pitch, the yells of tortured men and beasts, where no eye can see aright, nor ear hear, and the soul is dissolved in the terrors of the scene. What wonder if so the dead may be reported to have arisen, and spirits to have come forth at a word?”

“The works of Jesus,” said Judith, “are not like these.”

“Truly they are not,” said Shammai, “but are done in the open light of day, and in the streets of our cities, in the midst of watching crowds, with some Zadok ever nigh at hand. They who are sick he restores; they who are blind he causes to see; those whose limbs are withered and dead he makes whole as before, who all live and are among us to bear testimony to what has been done, as well as others who stood by and were witnesses of such deeds. These wonders, therefore, who shall deny it? show him to be of God.”

"Yet show him not to be the Christ," said Zadok, "nor as I believe, and shall believe, not with certainty to be of God, but with much likelihood, of the devil."

"Blaspheme not," said Onias; "thou knowest not whereof thou affirmest. If ever the God of our nation has appeared for us, if he indeed thundered with his voice at Sinai, or gave his spirit to Moses and Elias, then has he given it also unto Jesus. He is a prophet mighty in his power, even like unto them. What he is more than this, we know not yet; but we shall know soon. But we may hope that he shall prove a redeemer for Israel. And, saying this, I forget not Herod, nor our duty to him. I am his. But we know well that upon Herod rests no spirit like unto this that manifests itself in Jesus. He cannot in this be what Jesus is, while Jesus can be what Herod is, and more. It is no treason to say so. When and where God, the God of our Fathers reveals his hand and presence, there should his children, forsaking all others, cleave to him alone. Others are set aside. Let Jesus, therefore, declare himself Messiah, and use his powers to achieve Messiah's work, and we then muster under his banner, as under one whom God himself hath anointed. And to such an one do I believe would Herod himself show allegiance."

"I thank thee, my father, for these words," said Judith. "Thou wilt wait then. I feared"—

"Fear nothing," said Onias, "least of all, that I shall in anything turn a deaf ear to the evident voice of Jehovah. I look to Jesus with hope, as doth every one in Israel whose heart is right before God, and I wait to see what a few more days or weeks shall bring forth."

"Yet the people do everywhere hold him," said Judith, "to be not only a prophet, but the Christ also. The voice of a people, is it not a voice of God?"

"The people," replied Onias, "believe hastily and without reason, as their passions lead them. And then again oftentimes with as little reason deny and reject, what a moment before they believed, as new passions dictate. No; the voice of the wise man, if it may be affirmed of any, is rather the voice of God. Solomon, David, and the Prophets, rather than the multitudes of their day, spake with the warrant of Jehovah. When Jesus shall declare himself, and put forth his powers in the great work God shall have given him to do, will it be time enough to own him Christ. The people, in their shoutings and acclamations, in their ready faith and promises, are as the blind rushing toward the edge of a precipice,—they know not whither they go, and it may be toward their ruin—yet also it may be toward their salvation."

"Yea," said Zadok, "it is not more hours than one can easily reckon up, that this same people deemed John some great one, and now he is forsaken for Jesus. And to-morrow let a third arise, and Jesus will be forsaken in turn."

"That," said Onias, "is true, Zadok. But in respect of what thou hast said of John, as I learn, his disciples abandon him not, but cleave to him, holding him greater and better than Jesus."

"I know not how his followers judge either of him or Jesus," replied the Pharisee, "but the people, of whom we were speaking, while but now they thronged John wheresoever he moved, now speak the truth of him,



the truth at first, as well as the truth now, and say that he is as one beside himself, seeing that he dwells apart in the manner he does, feeds upon the wild fruits and berries of the wilderness, and for his clothing wears the garments of a beggar. Doubt not that presently they shall say yet worse things of Jesus; nay, that they do already, marvelling if he can be a Son of God who eats and drinks as others do, consorts with publicans and sinners, and by the power of God makes wine of water, that he and others with him may drink at will."

"Are such things reported?" asked Judith.

"It must be said that they are," replied Zadok, "and already among those who follow him doth it beget shrewd suspicions of whence he comes, and of the true spirit that inspireth him."

"Oh, say not so, Rabbi," cried Judith; "say not so. All that has thus far come to our ears speaks of him as gentle and holy. This is but the jealousy of a Herodian—admit it Zadok."

"As a follower of Herod," replied Zadok, "I profess not to love either him or John; that thou knowest, daughter. But in respect of what I have just said, I utter it not of my own knowledge, but speak only the common rumor."

"Common rumor," I said, "changes its hue and quality, however, even as water, according to the nature of that through which it passes. Thou wouldst not take as justly exact a rumor concerning John from the lips of Herod, nor can we any more one from Zadok concerning Jesus."

"We shall see," replied the Priest, "time will show, only, as I think, there will be found to be even less of

Christ in Jesus than in John ; but in neither, what should throw a stumbling block so big as a midge's wing in the way of Antipas."

"Let us not," said Onias, "be over-confident, nor judge beforehand. Who would willingly be found to fight against God?"

"As to what is said of the life and manner of the Prophet," said Shammai, "it surely matters little one way or another. If the Messiah drink wine, it would make it hard for one to say, why that should hurt him in the eye of the nation, and if he keep company with publicans and those who are little better, it were not easy to see how he should consort with many and not do so. A holy Jew must be sought for narrowly to be found. He who is to be gathering armies and laying the foundation of a new kingdom, will hardly employ himself in choosing nicely his company. As thou sayest, Onias, let us not judge beforehand, nor make mountains of ant-hills. Let us not pry into his secret life searching for rents, and spots of uncleanness. It matters not. It matters not. To be a busybody is worse than to be a sinner, and to judge bitterly worse than to be, or be called, a child of the devil."

So we conversed until the hour of retiring, when our visitors took their leave and returned to Beth-Harem.

When they were gone, Onias, as is his wont, called together his household for the evening prayer. Morning and evening he worships God surrounded by all who dwell beneath his roof, pouring forth the wants and desires of his heart concerning his own, and concerning Israel. This night, standing on the house-top in the midst of his large family, the air being calm, the stars

shining bright in the firmament, and no sound heard but the low music of innumerable insects, and the distant murmuring of the Jordan, he prayed with an earnestness more than common. His voice, not loud but deep, and bearing upwards not only so many words, but the very soul of him who spake them, fell upon the ear, as the voice of one more than man. When he had prayed for his own, and for thee, my mother, and for all in any sort bound to him, and for other things, with somewhat of that repetition to be noted in the devotions of all of this sect, he then prayed for Judea, for her peace, prosperity, and deliverance; "Make haste to help us, O Lord, make haste to appear for us, and with thy strong arm to cause us to stand, for we are now fallen to the ground and buried in the dust of the earth, and sunk into the deep mire, and overwhelmed beneath mighty waters, so that we are of no account in the sight of men, verily they hoot at us, shooting out the lip and laughing us to scorn as they pass by, saying, where is thy helper, Israel, and thy gods, O Jacob? And truly, O Lord, it is not as it was wont to be of old with thy people, when thy servant David sat on thy glorious throne, and the inhabitants of the earth trembled and fled from before him astonished. Then was thy people as the chosen of the Lord. Then each sat beneath his own vine and figtree, and the gentile who is accursed forever, licked the dust at our feet. But now we are had in derision; our enemies have risen up against us, and hold us in bondage, the yoke is upon our neck, our feet are in the stocks, our wine and oil, the fruit of the field, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, they are not for us, but the oppressor devoureth them before our

eyes, and for our wives and our little ones, their skin cleaveth to their bones, and their substance is carried away, and the stranger and alien hath gotten possession thereof. By reason of these things, O Lord, thy people are full of sighings and tears; we sit beneath the willows whereon we have hung our harps of pleasant sound, and bewail and lament. How long, O Lord! how long, wilt thou cause us to wait? How long before we shall see our desires accomplished upon those whom we hate? How long before thy wrath shall be poured out upon our enemies and consume them from the face of the earth, so that men shall seek them and shall not find them, and the smoke of their ruin and the stench of their corruption shall alone declare the place where once stood the cities of their pride, and dwelt the multitudes of their inhabitants. Consume them quickly in thy wrath, O God, and in thine anger cause them to perish. Let thy enemies and the enemies of Jacob flee before the face of thine anointed, and the kingdom be again given to Israel. Now is the set time, O Lord, the set time, the time for the redemption of Judah and the reign of Israel. Give us to know him whom thou shalt send. Let not our eyes be blind when the messenger of the covenant shall suddenly appear; let not our hearts be hard nor our ears dull of hearing. Make the signs to be plainly discerned even in the broad face of the heavens, that shall proclaim the King of Israel; and may the people quickly gather themselves unto him, with their swords girded upon their loins, with bows, and javelins, and spears, to take vengeance upon the oppressor, and bring deliverance to the captive. May thy kingdom come, even now, O Lord, that the

eyes of thy servant may behold it, and may there be no tarrying. Show us him whom thou hast sealed, on whom thou hast set thy name, whom thou hast called thy Son,—Son of David, King of Israel, Saviour of Judah, Redeemer of Jacob, The Anointed. Light hath arisen, O Lord, upon our land, but our hearts are divided, our minds are in doubt and amazement. Scatter the clouds, and let us see plainly in whom thou wouldst have us to trust, and where is the hiding of thy power. If it be in thy servant Jesus and in no other, or in John and no other, or in Herod and no other, cause that he quickly array himself in his royal robes, and crown himself with his royal diadem, and sit upon the throne of his fathers, so that we may know him, and that unto him there shall be a gathering of the people. Then upon our enemies shall there fall blasting and mildew, and a curse and utter destruction before the face of the Lord; and the kingdom of God shall be established, it shall be unto the ends of the earth, and there shall be no other."

These and other like things did Onias pour forth in his prayer; and truly if prayers be answered according to the faith and truth of those who make them, then will the petitions of thy brother be fulfilled; for his words are things rather than their names and shadows only. What he says is a thing done, having its force and reality.

As we descended from the house-top to the lower apartments of the house, Judith desired to speak with me; but when we had withdrawn to the portico, she deferred still to some other time that which she wished to communicate, and together with the rest of the household we also retired.

The earuest manner of Judith, while at the same time she lightly postponed the interview which a moment before she had sought, led me not with doubt or difficulty to conjecture what it was, that would have been the burden of her discourse. As I have already said to thee, my mother, she is beloved of the noble Roman, Saturninus, and by her is he in turn equally beloved, and well are they worthy each of the regards of the other. But the bar which their religions raise between them appears insurmountable. In Rome, indeed, as thou knowest, it is not seldom overleaped, and the Roman and the Jew are joined together. So too in Judea are these differences overcome on the part of many; especially in those places where the introduction of Roman usages and the Roman tongue with Roman inhabitants, has helped to bring the two people into a nearer intercourse, and a better knowledge of each other. They have in this manner discovered, what else they might forever have remained ignorant of, that save in name and in other matters not less accidental, they have been made by the Father of All much alike; that a Roman heart is much like a Jewish heart, a Roman nature much like a Jewish; that a man is a man, and a woman a woman, notwithstanding name, country, religion, and outward beauty or ugliness; and that the things in which they are the same outweigh, by an immense preponderance, those wherein they are different. So that in such circumstances, in spite of the outcries of many, and the prejudices inherited from ancient customs, the Jews and natives of Rome and other countries have obeyed the instincts which have directed their affections to each other. Yet are there many, very many, who would by no means give way to

such affection in themselves, nor permit it in a child. And of such is Onias.

The regard, which at first he conceived for Saturninus, led him to extend towards him hospitalities and a friendship, rare in a Jew toward an alien, and which have brought upon him in no light measure the rebukes of the more strict. But had he foreseen the consequences, sooner would he have sacrificed his life, I believe, than have done aught to provoke them. He relied doubtless on the natural hatred of the Jew for the Roman, to defend his daughter, as himself, from any nearer intercourse than the distant one allowed by the most formal observances of society. Alas! how vain the reliance. Love laughs such barriers to scorn. It is free of country, religion, and the wide world. Nevertheless, what shall Onias do or say? Only one thing possibly. Never would thy stern yet loving brother, that Jew of Jews, that hater of the gentile, surrender her to a Roman. How will Zadok now, and such as he, gall the spirit of Onias by their harsh constructions. How will they charge this issue as a judgment of God upon him for his looseness in receiving the heathen to his board. Yet in Shammai will he find a gentle adviser and friend, and so too will Judith, and one no less confiding in Julian.

I thank thee, my mother, for thy late full supplies of Roman news. Surely Sejanus must have been made blind by the gods not to perceive the significance of such conduct and such language in Tiberius. Yet perhaps it is but the blindness which a low ambition and a wicked selfishness inflicts necessarily upon itself. He has gazed upon his own dazzling fortunes so long, that eyesight is gone for other things. Grim and deadly as



Tiberius stands before him, he sees him not; nor any better can he hear the low but heavy rumbling, as of an earthquake, of a nation's discontent,—of that vast multitude whom he has injured in themselves, their friends, or their fortunes, and who now begin to perceive that the Emperor is also on their side, and one tyrant may be set against the other. That were a sight truly grateful, to behold either of those who have glutted their fatal appetite on so many innocent, at length falling into the bloody fangs of the other. Such a fate seems likely enough to befall Sejanus, yet after all he may first spring upon Tiberius.

You say that little heed is given among our people in Rome to the rumors which have reached it of Jesus, and you yourself show not by your replies, that your own concern is much deeper. Judith marvels at this. I do not; seeing that the accounts which have reached you of Jesus, are none of them such as agree with the prevailing hopes of the expected deliverer. Jesus having given no sign by which to judge him, save his miracles, I marvel not at all that you in Rome at once rank him with those who, by the arts of magic, and credulity on the part of the multitude, have a thousand times deluded the nation. The wonders which are ascribed to Jesus cause him naturally, where there is no opportunity of a careful examination and comparison, to be put but on a level with sorcerers and exorcists, of whom the world is full. But I am clearly persuaded, my mother, that there is something more in what is now taking place than you, and others in Rome, dream of; widely different from what has been witnessed before, either here or elsewhere. For the works of a wonderful kind, which are related of



Jesus, are in their nature, and the manner in which they are performed, so different from such as are done by magicians, that all who have witnessed them declare with one voice, they can be performed by no other power than that of God. Pharisee and Sadducee, Jew and Samaritan, all agree in bearing this testimony. They doubt not that he is indeed a prophet, filled for some purpose, not as yet known or by him declared, with the spirit and power of Jehovah. But besides this, it is affirmed that his teachings are such as declare him to be of God, not less, or more than his miracles, that his character is every way admirable, and his life holy, beyond the measure of other men. Can we doubt that he will presently show himself to be more than a prophet? It will not be long, therefore, as I judge, ere you, in Rome and in other distant places, will, even as they who are here present, be curious to learn all that is to be known of this strange person. As you will yourself, my mother, be more and more desirous of further intelligence, just in the proportion to that which I shall send you—for where was there ever goodness in which you felt not interest?—I shall take all pains to keep you informed of whatever there is worthy of trust that comes to my ear. I cannot well judge myself what shall be its issue; but shall, I confess, be amazed, if so much do not result as shall fill with astonishment not only Judea but Rome also.

Remember me with affection to the members of our household, and to my fellow travellers.

## XVIII.

THIS, my mother, reaches you from Tiberias, whither I am come at the command of Herod.

It is many weeks since I last wrote. As we are now suffering under the fervors of a summer's sun, I grieve not, that I am perforce on the shores of this inland sea, over which the winds as they sweep are deprived of a portion of that burning heat they bring with them from the Asiatic deserts.

A few days only had passed after I had despatched my last letter, when by a messenger from this place I was summoned to attend the Tetrarch; and Onias at the same time left Beth-Harem for the western shores of the Dead Sea and the region of Idumea. I was by no means sorry to be thus drawn away from Beth-Harem, from which, owing to the manner in which I have bound myself to both Onias and Herod, I have not been at liberty to depart, as I had intended to do from time to time, that I might see more of the country and the inhabitants.

On my way to Tiberias I passed through a long stretch of the valley of the Jordan, giving to the eye of the traveller a succession of scenes similar to those on its banks in the neighborhood of Beth-Harem, and Bethabara. The lake of Gennesareth greeted the sight with a wide prospect of beauty, as on a short turn of the

river it suddenly opened upon me, lying quiet and calm in the bosom of hills running along on the eastern and western shores, the loftier mountains of Lebanon showing their snow-clad summits in the north. Immediately on gaining the borders of the lake, Tiberias rose to view on its western side—a large city encompassed by lofty walls, the buildings rising as they retreat toward the mountains one above another, and overlooking the whole extent of the lake. Hither I directed my steps, but learned that the palace of the Tetrarch, in which he chiefly resides, is at a little distance without the walls, covering a small eminence that commands a view of the city and of the water.

I doubt not, my mother, you have wondered not a little that I have continued thus to unite myself to the service of Herod, for whom in various letters I have expressed but slight regard. I have been surprised myself at times at my own position and relations toward him; to that degree indeed that I could not find any explanation but in the persuasion, that we are led toward the ends that are best by a providence whose designs we cannot penetrate, whom we can serve only by submitting to its controlling and guiding force. I have faltered, I confess, in my purposes more than once; for, notwithstanding the deep convictions and lofty praises bestowed by Onias and Zadok upon the Tetrarch, I have felt inclined to put more confidence in the results I have myself arrived at concerning him, in spite of my comparatively narrow opportunities of observing and studying his character. Still while any darkness or doubt remained, I was willing to seek him once more that, if it

were possible, by further communications it might be removed.

Upon announcing myself at the palace gate as desirous to see the Tetrarch, I was conducted to an apartment, where I found Chuza, the Steward, who received me courteously, as one whom he had known before at Machærus, and who was aware of my relations to Herod. Joanna, the wife of Chuza, sat at an open window plying busily her needle, while a little child pursued its sports at her side. The mother raised her head as I entered, revealing a countenance sad, and exhibiting traces of recent tears. Yet she received me with a smile, and bade me welcome, as Chuza named me, to the palace. Upon inquiring for the Tetrarch I was told he was then absent upon the lake, but would soon return.

“In the meantime,” said Joanna, “be pleased to rest here where the air comes cool from the water and the approach of the king can be seen.”

“You have of late had another king, as some esteem him, upon these waters;” I observed to Chuza.

“Aye,” he answered; “that is, at the other end of the lake in the region of Capernaum. He hath made there a great stir, and indeed among the people here also, many having followed him, even from Tiberias. Had he drawn nearer to us I fear lest the palace itself had sustained losses.”

“And may even yet,” said Joanna in a low voice, as if speaking rather to herself than replying to her husband.

“There it is,” exclaimed Chuza, “there it is. As thou seest, sir, all the people are beside themselves—towns emptied, cities in confusion, the husbandmen for-

saking the field, the housewife her distaff, families divided among themselves, all for this—how shall we name him ?”

“Name him as yet,” said his wife, “no otherwise than reverently ; for, as I have said, neither thou, nor I, nor any one, knows what or who he may be ; yet of one thing are we even now doubly assured, that he is a wise and righteous man.”

“But,” said her husband, “suppose he draw from Chuza his wife Joanna ; how, and what then ?”

“Then,” said Joanna, “let Chuza follow.”

“Not so, not so,” cried the steward, “I leave not what is, for what only may be ; nor will Joanna, if she will be ruled by realities instead of dreams.”

“It is no dream,” said his wife, “that the words of Jesus are like those of no other, that he speaks as none of the priests or scribes ever do, and that he performs wonders which those only can whom God inspires, and by his life and virtues fills those who draw near with an awe and a love, such as are felt toward no other.”

“Nay,” replied Chuza, “all that may be real and no dream ; thou hast seen and heard thyself, and who shall deny the truth of what Joanna the daughter of Phasaël affirms ? Yet still may it be declared, that all this woven together makes but a weak and insufficient reason for doing as so many have done and are doing. For that, there will, as I have constantly affirmed, be time enough and more than enough, when he shall more plainly have declared himself.”

“Thou seest,” said Joanna, “that I am content to wait.”

“Thou art the very best of wives,” cried Chuza, “and

in saying so, I forget not our great mistress." As he ended, he snatched up the little child, who had run towards him, and kissed it vehemently, as the best substitute he could find, near at hand and in the presence of others, of its young mother.

I was rejoiced to meet with one who had both seen and heard Jesus, and eagerly approached her to obtain some better knowledge than I had been able as yet to find access to, concerning him, when Chuza exclaimed,—

"See! the Tetrarch comes; his boat is already at the shore."

I looked as he directed, and saw the boat of many banks of oars making rapidly toward the quay. In a moment more Herod was seen ascending toward the palace.

Learning immediately that I had arrived, he desired my attendance. Herod on receiving me appeared not quite at his ease, as remembering the conversations that on my visit at Machærus had passed between us; yet did he so far overcome his feelings as to greet me with affability, and bid me heartily welcome to Tiberias, presenting me at the same time to some who stood with him.

"The present posture of our affairs, my young Roman," said he, "is far enough off from what at Machærus we promised ourselves it would be by this hour."

"It is so, indeed," I answered; "yet it seems to be so, in no wise as a consequence of any error on our part. We cannot control the sun in the heavens; but still less the minds and hearts of men."

"Ah," he quickly rejoined, "they are not for thrones who know not to turn the hearts of the people as they

will, and who keep not moreover their own counsels. By the soul of my father, I have come to think of myself but as of a common man, since the day I held by the judgment of Onias and a young stripling of Rome, rather than my own. Had John been then closely mewed up, we had now been far on to the end of our enterprise. Now, not only is he at large, still poisoning the minds of men, but another is sprung up of the same sort, save that he carries away the people even more than the first. For one to deal with, there are now two."

I asked if he himself had seen Jesus, so as to form any judgment concerning him.

"I have not seen him, though I have desired to do so. While he was on the upper shores of the lake I was at Machærus. But he draws many after him and astonishes them by his miracles—so all report to me, and all cannot be deceived. How sayest thou, Jaddua?" turning to a doctor of the Law who stood near him.

"Doubtless," said the Rabbi, "it was at first thought to be as your mightiness has said; there were wonderful works done by his hand, which verily seemed to be done by the power of God given to him as of old to Moses and Elias, and the people being all in expectation flocked about him, but with their eyes blinded because of such expectation, and incapable of judgment. But Jesus having been a long time among them, the blindness is now in part removed; and him whom so hastily they took for a great one they already begin to doubt."

"Ah, it is just as I have said," cried Herod; "I knew it would be with him as with John. They thronged the

Baptist awhile—now he is forsaken save by a few for Jesus, and to-morrow Jesus will in turn be abandoned. Sees not Onias, Julian, his folly? What is there here to cast an obstacle so thick as one's finger in our way?"

I said, I still thought that, whether deceived or not, the people were at present even too much distracted by the strange events of the time to be approached with much prospect of success. Yet if it be true, as the learned scribe hath reported, that already those who follow him begin to doubt him, the day could not be far off that he might resume his undertaking.

"It can be no otherwise," said Jaddua, "than that the people should fall away from him—for verily though they have sought him so long, what hath come of it? He still as at first wanders about on foot, consorting not with the great and the learned of the land, with the rulers and the chief priests, but with the common people, just as they happen to throng him, and in his teaching casts contempt upon the Law, its ministers, and its rites. Here, say the wiser, be few signs of the Christ, and we leave him with those who have eyes to see farther than ours; mayhap beggars and outcasts, publicans, and sinners of the gentiles may behold the Son of David, where we can see only a besotted son of man, or child of the devil."

"Yet," I asked, "they who doubt are, as I have heard, very few to the multitudes who still believe?"

"Ah," said Jaddua, "the multitude is easily led; feed them, only feed them, which Jesus does, and beside that please their love of wonder, and their friendship is secured. Doubtless the most part for such reasons do still believe, and so throng him. But they who look



toward the future, and think not of themselves, but of the salvation of Israel, begin to draw back, or are in doubt. They see before them, indeed, in Jesus, one whom they cannot fully comprehend or explain, but they see not the Christ."

"Truly," said the Tetrarch, "I can discover in this Jesus of Nazareth, from all the reports that reach my ear, no qualities or purposes that should cause hesitation or delay in our enterprise. He seems thus far to be a mild and peaceable man, concerning himself not at all, as doth John, with public affairs and things that are above him; but with more wisdom devoting himself to the instruction of the common people, and to the performance of works of charity and mercy, however the power by which he does them may be derived—whether from the God of Abraham, or the god of the Sidonians. If there be still great numbers who in their stupidity persist in the belief that he is, or will prove to be the Christ, he himself truly appears to be possessed of more reason, and giveth no encouragement to such madness, affecting no state and making no promises even, so we hear, to his nearest followers. This man we may well let alone; nay, if it be true that he assaileth the Law and the Pharisees, and impugneth the spotless righteousness of their lives, it will go hard, but the priests and the Council will see after him, and serve us better than we could serve ourselves. Say we not right, Jaddua?"

"I would not that aught should be done in haste," replied the scribe, "but as I trow, should all prove to be true that we hear, I think, and I trust that those of whom thou speakest will see to it, that his career shall be a short one. There be those yet among both rulers

and people—glory be to the God of our fathers—who love the Law, and will not see it assailed, or stained by so much as a word or a breath of reproach, but they will stand forth to stone the blasphemer unto death.”

“I doubt it not,” said Herod, “our subjects are loyal toward not us alone, but the Law also; and such a people shall be blessed of the Lord and prosper. I fear not Jesus, nor any power he may win over the people, seeing the path he hath chosen to travel. He, I say, may be let alone; yet the insolence of John well deserveth punishment; and of his purposes there may be with reason more apprehension. His tongue is as a scourge of scorpions that falleth alike on all, we, even, escape not, but he whips us before the people for our sins, as he counteth them, as any beggar of them all. Let him look to himself. By the soul of my father, but it were a good deed to hang him in his own girdle. What think you, Jaddua?”

“As a busybody, an intermeddler, a despiser of authorities, and one moreover who casteth dirt upon our holy order,” answered the scribe, “and aimeth to bring the excellent and the holy into contempt with the people, doth he well deserve the favor thou wouldst bestow upon him. The rabble truly affect him, and doubtless would clamor; but who are they to stand between the Law and its victim?”

I said that I did not believe John could be touched with advantage or safety. The people hold him to be a prophet, and conceive besides that he is their defender and shield against the priesthood, the Pharisees, and the mighty in the land, whom he assails in his preaching, and accuseth openly of the hypocrisies and iniquities

which all men know to lie at their door, but which none save he is bold enough to charge upon them. Such charges the people know to be just, as doth every one who hath the natural sight of a man.

By the sudden expression of Herod's countenance I could easily perceive, that he secretly enjoyed what, I confess, I said without so much as thinking of Jaddua, and the presence of some priests who stood with him. He turned to them as they were ready to break out with indignation and said,—

“By the beard of Aaron! but this youth is little more civil toward the holy priesthood, than John himself. We must beg you, Fathers, to pardon his ignorance, seeing he hath but of late come into our kingdom, and seeing, moreover, he is hardly yet arrived at years of wisdom. We will advise him in private, and do what in us lies to inspire him with due reverence toward the ministers of the Law, whose lives should be as spotless, yea, and are doubtless, as their robes.”

Saying this he motioned to them to withdraw, which they did with countenances inflamed with rage, putting unwilling restraint upon their tongues.

Soon as they were withdrawn and beyond the reach of our voices, Herod broke into loud laughter, amusing himself greatly with their looks of astonishment at hearing themselves so berated in the very presence of the Tetrarch. “The knaves,” said he, as soon as he could cease from his laughter, “they have for once heard the truth in the king's presence, or rather some small portion of it. Though we reprove them not ourselves, it being needful to secure their good opinion, yet we know them well, and were well content to behold them

writhing under the scourge thou didst lay on; would it had been with the scorpion lash they so well deserve. But I saw why thy hand was stayed."

Calling upon me then to follow him, we left the more public room where we had been conversing, for one more private, into which none are admitted but the partners of his most secret counsels.

When we were seated in this more private apartment, Herod asked with particularity after Onias, and said he, "that bright flower of the Jordan, Judith, how fares the damsel? well worthy for her beauty to be queen of Judea, Rome, or the world."

I made slight, but as I was bound to do, courteous answer, though I confess a pain, at hearing her name from such lips. Yet, perhaps, I do Herod injustice.

I need not relate, my mother, the conversations which now ensued upon all the subjects connected with the enterprise of Herod, the obstructions thrown in his way by the appearance of John and Jesus, and the probabilities concerning the success of Sejanus in Rome, and the aid to be derived from him. Of all the impediments, however, which oppose his movement, it is easy to see, notwithstanding the manner in which at first he had spoken of it, that he most fears the power of Jesus. He will not confess it before the Pharisees and the priests, but seeing deeper than they, he apprehends lest by those very virtues, and that humble and lowly manner of life, which to a dull sight seems to make him harmless, he should build for himself a foundation in the hearts of the people, deeper than could have been laid in any other way, and too deep to be rooted up. "Although," he said, "I have not seen him, yet I have made the most diligent

and exact inquiries, and to them all I have as yet received but the same answers, all of which go to prove that a man every way extraordinary hath arisen among us. His virtues and manner of life are such, as secure the veneration of most of those who throng his steps, notwithstanding there be some who accuse him of excesses, and of hostility to the Law; but these may well be set down as calumnies of those who envy him—for when was there innocence or virtue, without their detractors? His powers of healing and working other miracles witnessed by so many—whether they be powers derived from our God or some other, or whether from magic, or the spirits who fill the earth and air, I cannot guess; nor can I tell in truth whether his life and character be sincerely exhibited, or falsely, for selfish purposes only. All I truly know, young Roman, is this, that he obtains sway over the people, and that each day thus far, as my spies inform me, doth it grow wider and wider. At the present time, I confess my fears to have somewhat diminished, from what has even within a day been reported, that he had offended the Pharisees by the heat of his reproaches, and caused many to doubt his Messiahship by reason of the strange truths he preaches, which appear to those who follow his steps to be contradictory of the office and work expected of the Christ, and to make it impossible, that with such opinions he should ever undertake them. Let him proceed in the same way, and at least, the more powerful of the Pharisees, of the Council, and of the nation, will be turned against him, being persuaded that he who can deride and contemn them, the very sinews of the nation, cannot be that Christ who is to exalt the nation. So far, accord-

ingly, as these are concerned, they will work for us, without the necessity of our interposing. Jesus himself will destroy himself. But, Julian, behind these who are the few—however powerful—there are the many, the stupid populace, this fiery headstrong rabble of the common people, whom to bridle, ride, and govern, asks the craft of the devil, and the strength of seven archangels. They are now beside themselves with their foolish worship of this man of Nazareth—our cities and our towns depopulated, while they run hither and thither, as they say, to hear his words in the synagogue, or by the roadside, but as is more likely, to gape with idle wonder, to gossip, and breed revolt. They doubt not—not they, O wise and far-seeing people!—that Jesus is their king, that by him, a mechanic-king, a low-born peasant-monarch, of their own base blood, they shall come to strange honors and liberties, they shall be slaves no more, but freemen of the soil, with a king over them or under them of their own choosing, and Rome and the Herods at their feet. These, young Roman, are our real enemies, and until they are drawn off from these wild fancies or Jesus is drawn from them, our purposes must halt, and our hands hang idle. And who am I, to defer to this carpenter-king—holding back while he mounts where I should stand?”

He paused and looked at me as if for a reply.

I said, “that I by no means wondered at the present enthusiasm of the people, but I was firmly persuaded that it would work its own cure. If Jesus,” I continued, “be in truth the Messiah by the appointment of God (certainly he is a prophet of great authority) then wilt thou, as well as I and every loyal Hebrew, hasten to do

him homage"—Herod's countenance grew dark—"we can desire no other than to acknowledge him whom God shall send—the people will then be where we would have them. If he be not the true Messiah, the signs that should show him such will be wanting, and the people, deceived in their hopes, will fall away from him; first doubtless revenging themselves for their disappointment. In the meanwhile"—

"Ay," interrupted the Tetrarch—"what in the meanwhile?"

"In the mean while," I resumed, "I should counsel a patient waiting, that we may not be found possibly resisting the purposes of Jehovah. And such," I added, "do I know to be the judgment of Onias."

Herod's lip curled with an expression of contempt, as he said, "Verily I think that you do all hold of the fair Judith, who, as I learn, is more than half a believer in Jesus; and for herself, as I learn also, is a disciple of the holy Saturninus."

It seemed strange to me that Herod should have known, even so much as this, of the private thoughts of two persons so remote from him, and I could not but entertain the conviction, that for purposes of his own he had informed himself by a direct employment of secret means of what could not have been easily known otherwise. Yet, it was possible also that he might have obtained all he knew by honest and proper channels. I therefore only replied,

"That it was indeed true that the daughter of Onias looked with great hope to Jesus, that he would prove himself both prophet and king; nay, though he were

only prophet, she would not refuse to own him as the Christ, did other proofs conspire."

"Ah," said the King, "that comes of her Samaritan rearing; she is foolish as her ancestors, who, denying the Prophets, who alone foreshow the Christ, are a people accursed. But, Julian, we stray from what we were saying. Lest, then, the people should cling too closely to Jesus, and overlook some of the reasons that may readily be urged against his claims, and lest the hindrances thrown in his way by the rulers and priests should not be sufficiently availing, it shall not be my fault if there be not thickly scattered over the land, wherever this Nazarene shall wander with his fishermen, those who shall sow in the minds of the people seed of another sort, and pluck up, as they may, what he hath planted, and stir into the mass of those whom he shall gather together a leaven, that shall cause it to move and heave, if not to my rising, to his falling. I might perhaps and with safety, as I just now said, leave this whole office to the Pharisees, priests, and to Jesus himself; it can hardly be doubtful to what issue events would come. But as it is a pleasure, in a remote retreat, still to use instruments by which at a distance great designs of others are rendered abortive, so I cannot wholly refrain from doing as I have hinted; but chiefly, you will not doubt, Julian, that I am moved to such endeavors that thereby the great Jehovah may be honored, the coming of the true kingdom of God be promoted and hastened, and those defeated, who, without other authority than that of their own bewildered fancy and the cries of a blinded populace, think to step in and thwart his purposes. While I live, and reign, let me be true to the Law, to the Pro-



phet who gave the Law, and to God who gave the Prophet."

I still ventured to urge a further delay, and on the ground, that as we could not know all the purposes and plans of Jehovah, so we could not feel sure that Jesus was not the Son of God, revealing himself to the people in the way, not in which we had been taught to expect him, but in a way appointed by him who sent him. There were indeed as yet no marks of such a character and office to be seen in him, nor had he declared to any one that he had come as the Christ; but it was not to be denied that he was invested with divine powers, that he was already possessed of a portion of the spirit of God, which, truly, the people look for as making a part of what shall constitute their king; and who therefore can say that he may not even yet, notwithstanding the present appearances, give those signs, whether in heaven or on earth, unequivocal and convincing, that shall prove him to be the Christ. He who can heal the sick, and convert water into wine, and to limbs withered and dead restore life and strength, and all by a word of the mouth, it is plain, has only to exert the same power in other directions and to other ends, to stand before the people in a blaze of glory, the dispenser of honors and wealth, the leader of innumerable hosts, the resistless conqueror, before whose arm, nerved with the energy of God, and bearing the thunderbolts of the Omnipotent, earthly power, though that of Rome with all the world in league, would sink and fade, as mists in the rays of the morning sun.

Herod seemed to be struck, as I spoke these things, with their reasonableness, and as I ended, I rejoiced to

find him not too much wedded to his own opinion, to say so.

"That is all possible," he said; "it cannot be denied it is all possible;—Jesus may yet put forth an energy that has not been seen or suspected, and show himself to be all the nation is looking and asking for. We learn too that there is not only mildness, but dignity and greatness also in his carriage, not unworthy a king." Herod paused, and for a few moments remained buried in thought, but from his musing suddenly broke forth with vehemence,—

"No, young man, no, it cannot be so. This is all idle dreaming. A Nazarene mechanic, a carpenter and the son of a carpenter, can never be king of Israel. I fear him not. Prophet he may be, Elias he may be, but not the Christ. The work of Messiah is one,—one chiefly, and for which there is little meetness in this lamb-like peasant of Galilee. So, too, I believe, the people will soon discover, as well as the scribes and priests. But enough of this. Let us now forth; I would show thee, Julian, that in Tiberias not less than in Machærus are there proofs many and convincing, that the Tetrarch of Galilee needs but to use the strength he has, to be hailed king of Israel! I will show thee the secret treasures of Tiberias."

So saying he called upon me to follow him, and leaving the palace for the city, we there entered the citadel, and in vaults and secret apartments and buildings, bearing without no signs of the purposes to which they were devoted, I beheld immense collections of all the implements of war.

"These," said Herod, "with more than these in Seph-

oris, are an ample supply for all the northern portion of the land, as those in Machærus and at Herodium are for all the southern. Let there be Jewish arms and hands to wield these instruments of death, with stout Jewish hearts behind these coats of mail, and the empire of Rome will quickly be at an end, not in Syria alone, but the East. Yes, Julian, in the East. Not with more certainty will Sejanus reign in Rome, than will Herod Antipas in Jerusalem; and not with a wider sway will Sejanus stretch his sceptre over Europe and the West, than will Herod over Asia and the East. And, that the last rivet may be driven into the compact that makes all this to be so, would I soon have thee, Julian, as hath been already agreed, hie thee to Rome; there, with the knowledge which thou more than any other in Judea possess-est, to complete what has been well begun. Sejanus, though no model of virtue, is yet as I think in public affairs to be trusted. But if one may rarely trust himself, without some misgivings, much less, surely, may he another. Wherefore, it will be thy more especial office, while in Rome, to contrive every most secret and unsuspected avenue to the soul of Sejanus, that his heart may be perfectly read, and the agreement or disagreement that exists between his words and his real purposes be discovered."

I said that all that could be done in honor to reach the designs of Sejanus I would not hesitate to attempt.

"In honor!" said Herod, "honor toward such as Sejanus? Hath he observed such rules towards others? And shall these come between a nation and its redemption?"

"Because Sejanus," I answered, "regards not the pu-

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rity of his soul, can surely be no good reason why I should bring a stain upon mine; and if it be that Judea or Herod can be saved only by transgressing such rules, then may they sink into the ruin that awaits and becomes them."

At first Herod seemed, as I spoke, as if his passions were about to rise as when I was in Machærus; but the expression of his countenance suddenly changed, and as I ended, he said laughing,—

"By the soul of my father, but that is well and bravely said. Violate surely, young man, no rule of truth and honor, that is really such; we would not have thee. Yet are there many, by the world, falsely esteemed such. Transgress these, and thou dost but the more sacredly observe the others. This is the sin I would have thee commit; no other."

We now returned to the palace.

That I may aid him in many affairs, in which I also now have an interest as well as every other Jew, Herod solicits me to remain for a season at Tiberias. This I gladly consent to do, that I may know more, through a nearer intercourse, of this strange man, and become acquainted also with this region of the country, especially with the shores of this beautiful lake. I shall hope also to wander as far as Cæsarea Philippi, the capital of Herod Philip.

## XIX.

MARVEL not, my mother, that I thus consent to remain in Tiberias and in the service of Herod, while, as you well know, I incline so strongly towards Jesus. My accounts of Jesus have made not a deeper impression on your mind than I should have looked for; and I am not surprised that in your last epistle you advise that I should for a time withdraw from Herod and Onias, and seek out the new Prophet, and follow him for a season at least, that by my own observation and hearing I may make up my judgment concerning his real character and purposes. This assuredly I shall do, if no clear and decisive judgment is made and proclaimed by the people, or by those who have already made the observations which I am hoping to do. In the meantime I am becoming thoroughly acquainted with the affairs and plans of Herod, to which, after all, perhaps, it is most probable I shall join myself. Besides this also, so constantly do we receive intelligence of the movements of Jesus, and of the progress he makes, and the opinions he declares, and the miracles he performs, that it sometimes seems to me that my means of a right judgment are as many and as trustworthy here, as if I were among the multitudes who throng his steps. Many of his sayings are becoming common, and are treasured up in the memory, or by others written down, that they

may be the better preserved, corrected, and enlarged by additions from future sources of information. The zeal in his behalf has been and is now almost universal; scarce any, save the chief men among the sect of the Pharisees and among the scribes and priests of Jerusalem doubting, that whatever may be his present appearance, conduct, and even language, he will in no long time break forth in all the glory of our expected Prince. Yet there are those, who hitherto have firmly believed, yet now are perplexed or doubtful—their perplexities and doubts springing, as far as I can at present discover, from the language which Jesus uses respecting the Law, his disregard of the Sabbath, and the slight he casts upon those who are at the head both of religious and civil affairs, and to whom, were he really Messiah, he would, they think, certainly attach himself.

After many days devoted to the affairs of Herod, I at length obtained the freedom which I had long desired, to visit the villages scattered along this western shore of the lake, and especially Capernaum at its head, where Jesus has dwelt much of the time since his baptism, and where he has performed many of his miracles; and Bethsaida, about midway between Tiberias and Capernaum, whence, as I learn, Jesus hath drawn many of his followers.

Alone, on foot, with my staff in my hand, did I perform this journey, keeping for the most part on the very shores of the lake, turning aside into the villages only for the purposes of shelter and rest by night.

Nowhere, as I believe, my mother, could the traveller enjoy more of what is both beautiful and grand in the

works of God, than on the shores of this little inland sea. As I left Tiberias with my face to the north I beheld the lake in its whole length, embedded, as it were, among lofty mountains, some approaching close to the very edge of the water, and terminating in abrupt precipices, others sloping gradually down with a plain between their roots and the lake, where roofs and towering pinnacles glittering in the sun from out the midst of groves, betrayed the sites of fortress, village, and city. Rising high over all the nearer hills, and reigning as kings over dependent princes, shone the snowy tops of Lebanon, with a blaze of light too bright for the eye to look upon without pain. Genesareth lay among these hills, calm and unruffled, save by the occasional stirring of a summer breeze, as it slowly swept over it, or by the passing across of the fishermen's boats, as they went forth to cast their nets, or were returning laden with their rich spoils. Although the heat of the sun was great, yet by seeking the shelter of occasional groves, or the ledges of rock overhanging the very brink of the water, I kept on my way without interruption or discomfort,—on the other hand enjoying in the highest degree the air, the prospect, the water, and above all, the freedom of motion of which this kind of travelling may boast over all others. Often, and with no other reason than because it then pleased me to do so, I lingered at the root of some heavy-leaved tree, where it flung its dark shadows over my path and on the edge of the water, or I lay along upon some smooth rock, and looking down into the clear depths of the lake, observed the sporting of the fish below, or watched the insects skimming waywardly the sleeping surface,—no slow-paced

mule, hard-going camel, or fleet Arabian would I have accepted, to be deprived of such pleasures, Time, I indeed wasted, or lost; but wisdom, as I think, I gained, and was satisfied with the exchange.

I soon reached Magdala, then passed Bethsaida, just visible on the west, standing far from the shores of the lake, and before the sun had reached his highest point, drew nigh to Capernaum at its extreme northern limit. When I was yet about two Roman miles from the town, still keeping to the very shores of the lake, but desiring, on account of the heat of the day and weariness, to reach it soon, that I might obtain rest, and the refreshment I greatly needed, I observed a boat, guided by two fishermen, making toward the shelter of some projecting rocks near which I was walking. While I stood watching their motions, they reached the shore, and leaping from their boat drew it up upon the sand. Not doubting that from them I could obtain information concerning Capernaum, and a knowledge of the shortest path thereto, I approached them and made such inquiries as I wished. They replied with civility, informing me of the inn at which I should stop, and pointing out the shortest road. "But," said the elder of the two, "Why, friend, shouldst thou not rest here with us, while the sun beats down so hot, and partake with us of our noon-day meal—thou shalt be very welcome." I replied that nothing could be more agreeable, as I was both fatigued with the way and weak through want of food. "Seat thyself, then," said the other, on yonder rock within the shadows of the overhanging cliff, and thou shalt soon feast upon better fish than ever were drawn from the Great Sea, or any other."



So saying, he and his companion employed themselves in first covering over with fresh leaves the fish they had caught, and then in lighting a fire of wood gathered from among the loose rocks, and preparing the frugal repast. The fish were soon broiling over the coals and the fragrant smoke spreading around a foretaste of the more solid enjoyment to follow. The cooked food, with but brief delay, was then spread upon a smooth rock which seemed as if it had long served for the same purpose, a loaf was added from the boat, and a cruse of water drawn from a spring in the dark recesses of the cave or grotto, at the mouth of which we sat ;—

“Now,” said the elder fisherman, “the dinner is ready, approach and eat ; but first let us give thanks.” So in few but reverent words and with uplifted face, he acknowledged the providence of the Ruler of the world, and the God of Israel.

“I perceive,” said he as we ate, “that you come by the way of Bethsaida and the southern part of the Lake.”

I said, “even from Tiberias.”

“I thought so much,” said the other ; “for though you carry in your countenance something of the Jew, yet it shows as if you might have sprung of some of the mixed races, whom Herod compelled within the walls of Tiberias to people his new city. But if you come from Tiberias, doubtless you can tell us news of what Herod is now doing. Many reports are abroad, but we can only guess.”

“I left him,” I said, “within the city, quietly dwelling within the walls of his palace.”

“Ah,” said the other, “it is not by knowing where

Herod now is, or about what he seems to be employed, that one can come at the truth. He is a man of many faces. What we hear is, yet no one knows anything with certainty, nor can trace the first springing of the rumor, that he is laying, in secret, plans for seizing the sovereignty of Judea—that many take him for the Christ who is to come, and hope through him to see the deliverance of the country.”

I said that I knew well that such things were whispered, but that at Tiberias no open signs were apparent of such movements, nor did the people there, though so near the Tetrarch, have any more certain knowledge of what had been spoken about, than he himself. Still more, Pilate and the Roman powers seemed to suspect nothing. How would the people of these parts, I asked, affect him, should such rumors prove to be well founded.

“He might find a few followers here,” he answered, “but not many, so long as John and Jesus are abroad among us. This youth, my partner, would join him, but so would not I.”

The young man, in reply to my question how he had come to a knowledge of Herod’s purposes, said that it had been through his messengers whom he employed and who were scattered over Judea. “As I judge,” said he, “by means of such messengers he will spread a knowledge of his plans throughout the whole land, and will so work against both John and Jesus, that they will ere long be driven from the land.”

“There’s a young hopeful for you,” said the elder Fisherman; “so caught away is he with these notions, that it is with much ado I secure now and then a day’s service at the nets or the line.”

Said the younger, "We must bear with one another ; the times are rent with opinions, families divided among themselves, and the wisest perplexed."

"God forbid it should be otherwise, Nathaniel," said the elder, "yet much I fear me that ere long trouble will spring up in Israel, and the implements of the husbandman and the fisherman be beaten into swords and spears."

I asked him why he thought so ; I could see no immediate signs of war.

"Who doubts," said he, "what is rumored of Herod ? Nought indeed can be affirmed with confidence ; even Pilate, as thou hast said, seems not apprehensive ; but though little is seen, none, who know the Tetrarch as well as his subjects in Galilee, would take that as a proof that there is nothing to be seen. His presence and power are everywhere, and everywhere discernible by those who, as I do, mingle with many people of all classes and opinions. Of late truly his activity has been less."

I was surprised to find that so much was known, or so shrewdly guessed, of the plans and movements of Herod. But desirous to learn what I could from this man, who, notwithstanding his occupation, seemed to be one of those destined by nature to be the instructors and guides of others, I asked him why he supposed the activity of Herod to be less now ?

"Without doubt," he replied, "because of the multitudes who throng after Jesus of Nazareth. Whatever are or have been the purposes of Herod, they must perforce now be laid aside, seeing that other sounds and louder have filled the ears of the people. Ah, Sir,

there were little chance for Herod, would Jesus only declare himself. The people urge him to so; but no such urgency has prevailed. While we cannot doubt that he is a prophet of God, seeing what his power is, yet will he give no sign, not to be mistaken, that he is the Christ?"

"Why," I asked, "are you so sure that he is a prophet of God? Is there no room for deception?"

"It may suit the purpose of some," he answered, "to call him deceiver, and to give his works to Beelzebub; but no one, who has himself seen and heard, can in his heart doubt whence proceed his wisdom and his power."

"And have you," I asked, "seen and heard him?"

"Oh, Sir, often. Since his appearance after the baptism in the Jordan, he hath dwelt in our village; and who is there in Capernaum that knoweth him not, and hath not seen and heard him? He journeys often indeed into the parts round about, and has lately been at the Feast in Jerusalem, and is now absent teaching in the towns near Samaria, but when these journeys are over, then he dwells in our town, and gladly do we hail his return."

"And doth he mingle freely with the people, so that they are permitted to know him?"

"Freely, most freely, doth he mingle with all who, with honest purposes, seek to hear him; none are so poor, or so humble, but he is ready to do them good, by giving them the instruction they need, or by healing their diseases. From among such as these,—such as myself,—has he chosen his chief friends, those who are always with him. Our neighbors in the village, and our neighbors equally on the lake, Simon and his brother

Andrew, fishermen as we are, not richer than we, nor higher in the world, has he drawn to himself; and those who once join him, it is certain will never leave him, with such veneration and love doth he inspire them. I had followed him myself, Sir, but for my family, whom I could not leave. Never am I so happy as when I listen to his words, in the synagogue on the Sabbath, or there, wherever it may be, in the street, or here on the shore of the lake, that he speaks to the people who hang upon his steps. Ah! how different his words from the rulers and scribes! Never did man speak as he doth; it seems, indeed, as if we heard the voice of God rather than man! There seems a power of truth in him beyond and greater than that of our Scriptures. When he hath read from the Prophets or from the Law, and then closing the volume hath spoken himself, our hearts have burned within us, and we have said to ourselves, who can he be who is greater than Moses and the Prophets?"

"Who, indeed!" I said, rather to myself than to the fisherman. But he heard me and asked eagerly,

"Do you then believe in him?"

"And what," I asked, "do you mean by believing in him?"

"Surely," he answered, "believe him to be the Messiah, the prophet foretold as to appear in these latter days, and redeem Israel from bondage. How else should I mean?"

I said, I knew not enough yet to warrant me in believing that, and asked him if he himself believed.

He answered and said, "I do believe; yet I know that in doing so, I believe rather because I will believe,

than because I find a proof that satisfies me. Jesus hath not himself said that he is the Christ, so at least say some, and if we believe him to be so, we believe in more than he himself affirms of himself. Yet cannot I help but believe. Not doubting him to be a prophet of God, I cannot doubt he will be more than that."

"Yet how can you be so sure," I asked again, "that he is a prophet of God and no deceiver? There have been many deceivers, who have misled the people. Is it because of his miracles? But may not evil spirits show such power through a man? or is not magic equal to such things?"

"I believe him to be of God," answered the fisherman, "partly because of his miracles, and partly because of himself. What you say, Sir, is very true, that miracles may be wrought by evil spirits, and some, perhaps, but not such as those of Jesus, by magic. Wherefore when I resorted to Jesus, being at first drawn to him, I confess, by the noise made by his wonderful works, I gave not my faith until I had heard his doctrine, and found it to be such as was altogether worthy of God; and then observed his character and manner of life, and found that they also were altogether god-like. Of this agreement and fitness I think we are capable to judge; for, is it reasonable to suppose that God hath given man power to know what food is nutritious to the body and wholesome, and hath not given power also to know what truth is nutritious to the soul, wholesome and divine, worthy of God to send and man to receive? So, when I found that Jesus was so holy in himself, and so divine in the excellence of his doctrines, then I felt sure that his works could be done by

no other spirit or power than a divine spirit and power, and I believed that he was a Prophet. But what I have now said in many words, was perhaps with me as it is, I doubt not, with most, the work of, as it were, a moment. For so do the countenance, the manner, and the first words of Jesus fall upon and convince the soul, that a persuasion, that he is honest and true, comes as soon as sight and hearing, and the miracle which we then witness, we are sure is from God. We then receive him as a teacher come from God, and his words and doctrine, whatsoever they may be, as the words and doctrine of God."

"Your faith, then," I said, "rests on the works of Jesus."

"Surely it doth," he answered; "his virtues and his doctrine, how excellent soever, could do no more than show that he was worthy to have come from God; not that he had come from him; for we know not how far the wisdom of a mere man may reach, nor how high his virtues may climb; but we do know that a man cannot do the works of Jesus, except God be with him, or else the spirit of Beelzebub; and a good man worketh not by the help of an evil spirit."

"Yet," said I, "there are not a few now, as I hear, who say that the works of Jesus are done by an evil spirit, and not by the spirit of God."

"Among us in Capernaum there are but few such," replied the fisherman, "and they are of the leaders among the Pharisees, who themselves, when Jesus first appeared, were the first to believe, and to cry out Christ! Christ is come! and throng about him with

their knee and mouth worship. Of the people there is not one who holdeth him not to be of God."

"But why did the Pharisees and scribes forsake him then," I asked, "except they were persuaded he was a deceiver, and that they had reasons of weight to offer against him? Who in the villages of Judea are of a better power to judge in such things than they?"

"Many things," he replied, "in the doctrines and manners of Jesus helped to offend them, and turn them against him. He would not flatter them, or bend to them, because of their office; but chose rather to consort with the good, however humble they might be, and even with gentiles and sinners of every kind, so they came to him sincerely desiring to listen to him. Moreover he loosened, instead of drawing closer and tighter the bonds of outward worship and rite, teaching that God judges by the state of the heart, and not by the number of a man's washings and sacrifices; and when he wished to show the people the difference between a painted outside and a pure heart, he would draw a picture of a Pharisee relying on the exactness of his observances, and of a publican, or a gentile, doing good actions, and then trusting to the mercy of God, and would justify the latter rather than the former. Openly too has he rebuked these Pharisees for what all the world knows them to be chargeable with, their covetousness and unjust exactions. All which, and much more, that it would weary you, Sir, to hear, enraged them, and the very man they were a little while ago exalting as the Son of God and King of Israel, they now upbraid as a child of the devil, and a minister of Satan—though Jesus stands among us the same as at first. So



that the people value not their judgment at the weight of a fish's scale, but see plainly enough that it is all a piece of malice, and revenge."

"It seems," said I, "to be indeed as you say."

"Be assured," said the other, "that it is so."

"You may safely believe," added the younger, "what Simeon has said; all in Capernaum would confirm it. I follow not Jesus as the Christ,—nor do I think he will ever prove to be that person. He hath no fitness for such a trust, as I judge; but who shall doubt, who hath but once seen him, that he is a Son of God, and a Prophet of Jehovah? He who should deny the works of Jesus, would deny the voice of God, through God spake in his very ear. Let Herod save Israel from Rome, and deliver her, and then shall both John and Jesus, as Elijah and Elisha, teach and rebuke, and be to the people through their instructions as a savor of life to the dying."

"Herod! forsooth;" cried the elder with some indignation. "Who shall be found in Israel to put their trust in him? I marvel at thee more and more, Nathaniel, that thou shouldst cleave to him—that thou shouldst hold to a man of violence and crime. Verily might Israel despair were her reliance on any of that wicked name. Would that Jesus without delay would declare himself and this Herodian faction would vanish as the mists of the lake at the breaking forth of the sun. And did he but know what their designs are and how busily and secretly they pursue them, sure I am it would move him to yield to those who urge him so to do."

"He knows well of the Herodians," said his companion, "and has warned the people against them and their

leader ; so learned I but yesterday, from one who was just from the Feast. But, if I may prophecy, Jesus will himself be sooner forsaken, than Herod. I see not any who bind themselves to Jesus but the poorer sort. Crowds of these are at his steps, and doubtless they truly honor him, but what staff are they, to lean upon in a great enterprise such as that of the Messiah."

"I trow," replied the elder, "they will help Jesus as much and as securely on the way to greatness, as Herod's vices will him. What a besotted people are these of Judah and Jerusalem, to deem that any good thing can prosper in the hands of a bad man ; and who worse than Antipas ? Cunning and cruel ! and who at this very time is about to make himself doubly an adulterer."

I confess, my mother, I felt the blood to tingle in my veins, and mount to my cheeks at the honest anger of this humble man, while I, looking only at ends, had too much blinded myself to the steps I was taking to reach them.

As the fisherman ended, and his partner was about to reply, as it seemed to me with some passion, there came one running toward us along the shore, in haste, as if to communicate somewhat of moment.

"The lad who runs," said the fisherman, "has the likeness of my son Judah ; yet why should he make such speed in the hot sun. It may be that Jesus hath returned to Capernaum."

In the mean time the lad came up to us, as we still sat at our meal.

"And what is the news ?" asked the father.

"The son of Phasael !" said the youth, as he could find his breath.

"Is he dead?" cried Nathaniel, "he lay this morning at the point of death."

"Not so," said the other, "but alive and well."

"Hath Jesus returned then?"

"No, yet hath he healed him, himself being at Cana."

"Friend," said the fisherman, "go with us, let us behold this wonder."

Binding on my parcel, and seizing my staff I hastened along with them. As we approached and entered the village we saw, by the commotion and the running to and fro, that a strange thing had happened, in which the whole people were alike concerned. All were forsaking their employments and hurrying in one direction to have the testimony of their own eyes, to the wonderful thing that had been reported. When we arrived at the dwelling of Phasaël—an officer of Herod's government—we could by no means approach it by reason of the throng, for it seemed that the whole town had run together into one place. But though we could not obtain near access to the house, yet could we easily behold the young man who had been cured, and who now came forth upon the house-top and showed himself to the people, and we could hear the declaration of his parents, that at the same hour that Jesus had spoken the word in Cana, the young man's fever had left him. We were filled with awe, my mother, as you may believe, at the recital and the observation of such things. I felt as if then and there God was among us and around us in some extraordinary manifestations of his presence. In low tones the people expressed their wonder one to another, and then in silence withdrew again from the place to their homes. The fishermen urging upon me, as the day was now

drawn to its close, to tarry with them in their humble abode, I hesitated not, but accepting, with many thanks, their hospitality, accompanied them to their dwelling.

When the evening had come on, many of the neighbors gathered together with us, and the hours were passed in much further conversation and dispute concerning John, Herod, and Jesus.

At the early dawn I was awakened by the host, and after partaking with him and his wife and children of the morning repast, set forward on my way, returning not as I had come, but, at the instance of the fisherman, by the way of villages lying removed from the lake, among which were Cana and Nazareth. "For thy pleasure merely," said he, "I could wish thee to keep ever on the shores of Genesareth, where thine eye can dwell upon finer things than can be found elsewhere in Judea, and where thou canst behold both the drawing in of the fishermen's nets, with the passage of their boats along the lake, and also feast upon the rich dainties they fetch up from the lower waters. Whose life shall compare with a fisherman's on the lake of Galilee? But because I would have thee see Jesus and hear him, for thine own sake and Judea's, I commend to thee this other road; and it will be strange if either at Nazareth or Cana, thou do not find him, or else at some point on the highway. Take with thee, friend, the counsel of one who has seen many years, and forsake the society and the cause of Herod. He cannot aid the cause of God in one way, who hinders it in another."

I replied to the fisherman, that I would not forget his counsel though I could not promise to follow it, and bidding him farewell, addressed myself to the pleasures

of the road. These I found to be well worth the seeking. The morning air was cool and invigorating, and the earth in all directions burdened with a vegetation uninjured by droughts, which in this climate often destroy the hopes of the husbandman, and promising the richest returns to the granary. Indeed the earlier grains are already ripe, and the fields yielding before the sickle of the reaper. Frequent villages and scattered dwellings separated by groves, or by an occasional barren track of rock and sand, afforded every variety of object which the mind could desire; and much additional information of every sort did I gather from those whom I overtook on the way, and walked and conversed with, or from those by whom I was entertained in the villages. The highways were filled with persons who, after resorting to Jesus for many days that he had remained in Cana and the towns round about, were, now that he had departed for another region, returning to their homes.

From conversations with many of these, I learned that Jesus having left Cana, had gone toward the sea-coast; but that while in this neighborhood he had performed many miracles by which the people had been astonished, and had been brought to believe in him, notwithstanding so many things make against him. They were persuaded he would yet show himself to be the Christ. They were simple country people, with whom I for the most part talked, and they could give no better or other reason for the faith they were disposed to rest in him, than that they thought him a good man, who would not deceive those who came to him, and it would be a great deception if he raised in them a belief that he was the Christ and suffered it to take root in them, when he was

not that great Prophet. They had heard many things indeed from him, which they could not understand, and many things which, if they heard them aright, made it indeed not easy to see how he should be the Christ who was to come into the world, seeing they were in opposition to the Law, and placed the Romans and all others as high in the favor of God as the Jew; moreover, he seemed not in any respect to justify such acts, as those by which the kingdom of God and of Israel must be established, if it ever be established. Yet, whenever he had spoken of righteousness, and what pertains to a man's life and his soul, they had comprehended him, and acknowledged a wisdom surpassing that of man and belonging only to one who, like Aaron, was the mouth-piece of God; so that they still believed. Among other questions which I put to them, I asked, if he had warned the people against Herod. They said that he had not failed to do so; he seemed to know well what every body guesses, that Herod is working in secret throughout Israel, although it be so that no one can point to any open act of his, and that Herod himself seems to be employed in quite other affairs, with getting him a new wife, and preparing to make war with the king of Arabia. Jesus spoke as if these were not his real designs; but there were quite others which he was aiming to carry on—to favor which he was covertly using every means to gain the hearts of the people. When I further asked what they themselves supposed such designs to be, they hesitated not, but believed that he was aiming at the throne of Israel. And they could not doubt that Jesus entertained the same opinion, and that it was to put the nation on its guard against him that he had spoken.

These, and other things which I learned on the way of such as I fell in with, greatly increased my desire to see Jesus, and my sorrow that he had turned from Cana toward the seacoast, instead of the East and the Jordan, as I had hoped he would do. I, however, kept on my way in the direction I had first marked out, as I could not prolong my absence without failing in my promises to Herod.

As the day declined I drew near to Nazareth, which, lying to the south of high hills, was not visible from the quarter in which I approached it, until winding about among many valleys and narrow passes, and last crossing a precipitous ridge, I at length suddenly came upon it, situated nearly at the foot of a hill, or rather where its last slope falls by sharp pitches into the plain, but having a mountainous region shutting it in on every side, and lofty abrupt precipices rising directly in its rear. The scene presented to the eye objects well calculated to delight and impress the mind of one who should dwell among them, no part of it being tame and flat, but either grand through the wildness of many of the hills, where no vegetation could fix a root by reason of the soil, rocky and worn away by descending torrents, or else beautiful on account of the diligent cultivation of the husbandman, or the groves of every variety of tree and shrub, which covered the plain, and flourished as it seemed with redoubled luxuriance, as a return for the riches of which the annual rains had robbed the surrounding heights and spread around their roots.

The sun was not far above the hills on the western side of this happy valley, shedding his last rays on tower, and village, and bleak hill top, as I entered, weary

with the hot and dusty way, the outskirts of the town. The houses of the rural population grew more frequent, as I drew near, each with its cultivated ground near it, a part always covered with the fig, the olive, and the date. At the doors or seated beneath the surrounding trees, were the inhabitants engaged in the various arts of domestic life, or else, their labor for the day being done, reposing in the shade or sporting with children, who here as everywhere seemed freely given of nature as man's best solace, and most effectual teachers. One of these humble dwellings especially drew my attention from the greater pleasantness of its situation, though otherwise it differed little from those that were in its neighborhood. An olive orchard covered it on one side, fig trees stood thickly around, and almost was the form of the cottage concealed by vines which had grown over it, burying it in a profusion of leaf and flower. But what chiefly fastened my gaze and made me here pause that I might put the inquiries necessary to my further progress, was the form and countenance of one who seemed the mother of the family, and who sat at the distaff in the entrance of the dwelling—younger members of the household and children sitting or playing around. For the face was one, which, as it was turned upon me on my approach, at once inspired confidence as well as raised admiration. It was not a matter of choice whether I should accost her, since before I had made any determination concerning what I should do, I found myself drawn away from the path I had been pursuing, and standing before her. Then, it was only with hesitating utterance, that I asked concerning the village, the distance thereto, and made such other inquiries as were needful. She had risen, as



I spoke, moving from where she had sat, as if to make way for my entrance within the house. Hardly waiting for me to finish my inquiries, she said,—

“You are already weary with the dust and travel of the road, and it is yet many a rood to the heart of the town, enter then, and rest here and be refreshed; when thou hast washed and eaten then thou shalt go on or tarry as thou wilt.”

With many thanks I accepted these hospitable offers. My sandals were soon removed, the vessels for washing made ready, loose and flowing garments adapted to this hot region, woven of the lightest threads, yet of a plain and homely material, were brought, and in no long time I was again vigorous, it seemed to me, as at early dawn.

As the table was now spread by youthful hands and covered with the food, easily prepared, of these regions, the mother said, “Our fathers, Sir, when they dwelt in tents, never shut the door against the stranger; the hot cake and the seethed kid ever smoked upon their board. It is little for us to do to imitate them who dwell in fixed habitations.”

“Yet it were not reason,” I answered, “that from their descendants of this age should be exacted the hospitality which distinguished them, seeing that in their time the people were few in number, and a stranger or foreign trafficker was rarely seen, and when seen he was indeed very heartily welcome, inasmuch as he brought news of foreign parts, of which knowledge could be had in no other way. As much was received as given.”

"So saying, Sir, you take away from our fathers the virtue of their actions."

"Not so," I answered. "It was not the less virtuous that it was sometimes and by accident rewarded, else the care of a mother, who sees the fruit of her toil in the virtues of her child, would lose its merit. Many are our acts which carry their reward along with them, and we must forbear the acts or consent to do them with the knowledge that a reward will follow. But surely this is different from the case of the Pharisee, who prays that he may be seen, or gives alms when he would withhold them but for some prospect of praise or advantage."

"You speak the truth," replied the woman; "were it not so our hope of Heaven would turn all our goodness into sin, or make it nothing worth. But to hope for heaven we cannot help if we would.—I marvel why my husband and sons come not; it is the hour of supper. But their tarrying shall bring no delay to thee; draw near and eat."

But while she yet spoke her husband entered accompanied by his sons, as if returning from the labors of the day, and when they had first washed, placed themselves also at their board, the daughters serving. I was bid heartily welcome to their humble roof by the father and his sons, as I had been before by the mother and her daughters, and I had passed but a little while conversing of such things as offered, ere I felt from the simple kindness that marked all their words and demeanor, that I was among such as both feared God and loved their neighbor. As soon as it was learned that I had come from the lake and through Cana, the mother asked if I

had seen Jesus in Cana, or in either of the villages in the road.

I answered that I had not, although it was in the hope to find him, that I had departed from Genesareth on my return to Tiberias.

"Are you then," she asked again with eagerness, "one of his followers, and do you believe in him?"

I said that I was by no means a follower or believer, although on the way I had fallen in with many such.

"I had hoped," she replied, "that you believed, for it seems as if your judgment would be honest." But after a moment's pause she added, "you have said that you are from Jordan and the neighborhood of Beth-Harem, what think they in those regions?"

I said that there, as all along on the borders of the lake, the greater part of the people believed in him; or stood waiting and ready to believe as soon as some sign more distinct and plain should be given them, that he is indeed the Person for whom they look. But I could not deny that for the reason that such signs had been delayed, many were losing their trust in him, giving in to the opinions of the leaders among the Pharisees, who were not only opposed to him, but exceeding bitter.

"I do not see," replied the mother, "why they should be bitter against him or seek his harm; he himself surely does no one harm, but is gentle toward all, save toward those whom he well knows to be hypocrites, and is full of benevolent deeds. I never will doubt that God is with him."

"It certainly," I here said, "will make against his success with the people, if it be true, as has been lately

rumored, that you of Nazareth do not believe in him, and more than that, that you have even attempted his destruction."

"It ought not," said the mother quickly, "it ought not to make against him any more than it ever should against a good man, that the wicked rail. Such railing is to his honor. It is on the part of the Nazarenes nought but envy."

"But," I rejoined, "the people of distant places say, if they of Nazareth, who have known him from his youth up, reject him, how can any believe?"

"And surely," said one of the sons, "they said it with reason."

"I cannot think so, Judas," rejoined his mother. "The people of Nazareth hold it ill, that one of themselves, no better and no richer they say than themselves, should set himself up as a teacher. They will not listen to such an one. Who were they who set upon him in the synagogue, and would willingly, in their rage, have cast him from off the precipice, but persons whom we well know, and well know to have been moved by no better spirit than I have named. The rumor was a true one which you heard, Sir, but it would not sway your mind against Jesus, did you know better the heart of these men of Nazareth; surely, methinks, to deserve their hatred is to be more secure of the favor of God."

"But," said I, "it is even reported, and I myself heard it at Capernaum, that the family of Jesus, his parents and brethren, believe not in him, but are as the other inhabitants of the place, which I confess filled me with astonishment, and caused me to think otherwise

than I had been inclined to do of those who, in other parts of the country, turn away from him."

"Do you not know then," said the father of the family, "that we are the parents of Jesus, and these his brethren and sisters?"

"Truly, I knew it not," I replied, "but I am rejoiced that a happy chance has thrown me among those whom it was my chief purpose in journeying through Nazareth to seek out. I bless God, who has guided me to your roof, for, I doubt not, it is highly favored of him. I am not, as I have declared already, a believer in your son, unless he may be called a believer who, though he has not seen, nevertheless believes in his honesty and truth, that he is all that thus far he has claimed to be. Every thing that I have heard from the very first has gone to persuade me that God is with him, and that it is with his spirit and power that he is inspired."

"And deeper down in your heart would your faith be," said the mother of Jesus, "if you yourself knew him of whom we speak."

"Nevertheless," said I, "I perceive from what you have already said, that the rumor of which I have spoken is true, that not only do the inhabitants of Nazareth reject Jesus, but that some of his own family reject, or, at least, doubt concerning him. This I confess amazes me."

"We would all," said the young man who had spoken before, "willingly believe if we could. Yet do not imagine that the feelings of the people of Nazareth, which my mother has truly, as I believe, ascribed to them, are wholly ours. It is with them envy and indignation, that a mere mechanic, and the son of one, should pro-

fess a wisdom beyond that of the scribes, and assert claims so high, and an authority above that of the Pharisees, the Rulers, and the Council. He has been so long their townsman and fellow-laborer, that they cannot at once receive him as a teacher and a ruler."

"I can understand the feeling," I said.

"Jesus himself," continued Judas, "gave it the right interpretation, when, as he left the synagogue, he said, a prophet is honored everywhere else rather than in his own town, and among his own family and friends."

"That," said I, "I doubt not, is according to our nature."

"But," replied the brother, "believe me when I affirm that it is not this sentiment alone nor chiefly, that governs his parents or brethren."

I said quickly, "I was sure he spoke the truth. In your very faces," I added, "I behold the signs, which makes such feelings impossible to you."

"The Lord reward you," said the mother.

"Yes," resumed the brother, "the Lord bless you for your good opinion. We have by many been reviled, but we can think no otherwise than our own minds will allow. We should not be blamed for opinions which are forced upon us against our will and our old affections."

"Why then," I said, "if it be not to ask too much, do you hesitate to give a full faith to Jesus? I would fain know whether the same things weigh with you as with others, in other parts of Judea."

"We have not doubted hitherto," resumed the brother, "that Jesus is inspired of God. We do not, as others, wickedly give the wonders he performs to spirits of the

dead, or to Beelzebub, of whom and whose power we believe nothing, nor in truth do many of those who make such assertions. The whole manner of his life, as well as the strange events at his birth, convince us that he is highly favored of God, and by him reserved to some mighty work."

"What is reported then of his birth, and we have all heard, may be received as true?" I said, turning as I spoke towards the mother of Jesus.

Her countenance, radiant with faith and love, beaming with all the marks of conscious truth, gave silent answer to what I had asked. Never had I beheld in mortal woman what for more than mortal beauty and a certain divine charm, seemed so like a blessed angel of God. The silence of all, as their eyes, like mine fastened upon her, also gave answer to my inquiry.

After a brief pause, Judas continued; "What it is that of late has perplexed us and caused us against our nature and our desires to doubt, has been the strangeness of the doctrines which Jesus has preached, and the strangeness of his conduct. In good truth he is no longer a Jew—he is rather anything else—and can we hold him longer with an unwavering persuasion to be a prophet of God to his people, who sets aside the law God himself gave to that people, to be an everlasting covenant between him and them?"

"Yet have I been told," I said, "that he attended both upon the services of the synagogue and at the feasts in Jerusalem; that he of late went up to the Passover and the Pentecost."

"You say true," replied Judas, "it is so as you have heard. But nevertheless that is true also which I have

affirmed. He preaches indeed in the synagogue, but what preaches he? The Law? The Prophets? Their excellence and everlasting dominion?—the claims of Israel to the favor of God before all other? Not so. But in the face of all this, his own authority he sets up against that of Moses—the Prophets shall pass away or be changed—the Kingdom of God shall be thrown open to Gentile as well as Jew! Is it to be supposed that a man from God would come and overthrow the word and the work of Him who sent him? What can we say, what can we do? It was hearing such things, as well as envy, that filled the men of Nazareth with rage and drove them mad against him.”

“What make you then, I asked, of the miracles of Jesus? They surely show him to be sent of God.”

“This also perplexes us,” resumed the brother. “He does the works of God, while he assails to overthrow it, the truth of God. How, we ask can these things be? As we judge, our allegiance to Moses and to God forbid us to believe.”

“Not quite so,” interrupted the father, with a voice of mild rebuke; “Judas is carried away by his zeal. We refuse not to believe; we only say that we now waver and are perplexed. We cannot reconcile the one with the other, the miracles that he doth, and the doctrine that he preaches, yet we trust to be able to do so.”

“But,” said I, “do not the miracles that he does, supposing his power to be that of God, and not of a devil,”—

“Oh, we doubt not that his power is of God,” they all cried, interrupting me; “so holy and just a person,



whom all love and honor who know him, could receive nothing from, and hold no communion with, a wicked spirit."

"Then," I continued, "do not his miracles which he works by God's power, show that his doctrine must be approved of God? Would not such power be withdrawn if it were made to substantiate aught at variance with his will—howsoever it may differ from truths previously delivered?"

"Surely," said the mother, "the young man reasons aright. How shall he preach contrary to the truth of God, who hath power to do the works of God? It may be that by the mouth of Jesus he would declare some new truth, not such as shall be in violation of the Law of Moses, but in addition to it; and truly, as I think, there is much that passes among us as the law given of God, which were perhaps better termed the false conclusions of vain and mistaken men."

"Ah, my mother," said Judas, "thou art carried away by thy love to say things contrary to the truth; here now wouldst thou cause the Law, even the Law of God, to veil itself before the wisdom of thy son Jesus! I should fear to do that. Mayhap thou dost still hold him to be even the Christ?"

"Nay, nay, Judas," exclaimed his sisters, "say not so."

"Forbid him not," said the mother, "I do believe him to be the Christ. Yet ask me not for a reason for this faith; for alas! I cannot give it. Nay more than that, Judas, many things that he hath said and done I comprehend not; I can by no means resolve. Yet cannot I help but believe. The truest faith, is methinks, of

the heart ; but it is as much without reason, as a mother's love of her child."

"And it may be, my mother," replied Judas, "that your faith shall in the end, without its reasons, prove truer than ours, with so many which we judge so strong. And if it would bring a greater happiness to the mother, to behold her son on Messiah's throne, may her happiness be made complete, if it be the will of God. But doubtless to such as judge on the grounds which the prophets furnish, no one thing appears so difficult to believe as that. For save the power to do wonderful works, a power which has been bestowed upon many, there seems no correspondence whatsoever between him and the Christ. What do we, what do the people of Israel look for in the Christ? Verily it is one and the same thing in every mind, a Redeemer, and a deliverer from our bondage; who shall then reign our King and Prophet over a kingdom without limits as without end. This is what the prophets have taught, and this is what the people believe and wait for with impatience. Is Jesus such an one? Are there in him signs that mark the Conqueror and King? Is there in him aught that savors of Judas Maccabeus? or even of Judas of Galilee? Nay, can one so much as think of Jesus doing the deeds that must be done when Israel shall arise and enter into her glory? Has he not indeed, when teaching the people, declared things which, if they be rightly understood, make it but a sin and an offence to seek dominion and to aspire after honor and seats of pride and power? He commends the humble, the meek, the peaceful, and such as are content to submit and serve, taking heed only to their souls, to keep them holy in the sight of God, re-

buking the contentious and ambitious, the lovers of place and authority. How shall such an one be the Christ of Israel? Such precepts consist not with the character and deeds of the Son of David. They agree well with the character of Jesus, and no other precepts should I ever look to hear from his lips, and so should we all say"—

"Yes, surely we should say it," fell from all.

"But," continued Judas, "they agree not, as I have said with the office and work of the Son of David."

As Judas ended, the others were silent—the mother of Jesus buried as it seemed in many thoughts of which no others might be sharers. Presently as the supper was ended we went out and sat beneath the vines, that hung over the dwelling and stretched also from tree to tree; the warm air and the bright heavens, thickset with the stars of evening, inviting us where such pleasures could be enjoyed in addition to those of friendly discourse. Here then, when we were seated, the father and his sons with me, I sought to renew the conversation that had been broken off, being desirous to learn what I could from those who must possess in many things a more exact knowledge than can be found elsewhere, and who appeared not less disposed to impart what they knew or thought, than I was to listen to their words.

But as I had already gathered so much from them concerning themselves and their relations to Jesus, I began our conversation by informing them of my own life and opinions, not withholding from them my conviction of what I believed was Herod's part in the present affairs of Judea, though by no means communicating other things respecting him and myself, which I was bound

not to reveal. What I had said concerning Herod was already well known to them, as being generally known or suspected throughout the land, yet, nothing coming abroad, however, with such distinctness as to give occasion of alarm to Pilate. With Tiberius Herod remains in highest favor as a fast friend to Rome, as he has ever been to Roman customs. To his hostility to John and Jesus, he takes care to give the color of friendship and zeal for Rome, and the security of his possessions. So that of designs inimical on his own part they think not.

When I had ended, Judas said, "Herod is the bitterest foe of Jesus; not openly so, but secretly through those whom he employs to beset his steps, and inflame against him the Pharisees and the people. While he supposed Jesus to make no pretensions and lay no claim to the office and title of Messiah, he did little against him; but since it is affirmed that Jesus has declared, not only as at first, that the kingdom is at hand, but that it has come, and that he is the expected Prince, and that by his disciples it is believed that he is so, Herod has become more active, and as we just learn is resolved upon his destruction. There are those in Nazareth and in Jerusalem who, together with a Priest in Beth-Harem, are in league with each other to seek occasions when the passions of the people may be roused against him, and a tumult raised, in the confusion of which it will be easy, they suppose, to effect their purpose."

In what Judas said I was astonished at two things, that Herod was actively employing his agents in opposition to Jesus, and that Jesus was now known to have declared himself the Messiah. As to the first, Herod at Tiberias had said that he did not hold it needful to

do aught against Jesus, seeing that the anger of the Pharisees, whom he rebuked with such severity, would do for him all he should desire to be done. He must therefore have deceived me, or else have suddenly changed his purposes. I was also surprised to learn that Jesus had with such explicitness avowed himself the Messiah, that it had come to be known as a truth to be relied upon. For hitherto, although the people were clear in their belief that he would prove to be that person, and would so declare himself; yet from him they had been able to obtain only obscure and doubtful hints. The fact that he had now confessed himself the Christ, it seemed to me, would decide his fate one way or another in a short time.

"That has now happened," I said to Judas, "which but a little while ago at supper I was about to suppose the occurrence of, and ask your opinion concerning it. Jesus acknowledges himself the Messiah; but with this declaration is there any change in his doctrine, or his appearance?"

"There is not," said Judas.

"And what then," I asked, "will be the effect of such declaration?"

"It is not difficult," replied the other, "to foresee. It will cause him to be rejected and denied by all Israel as one man! How by possibility can it be otherwise? Hitherto while himself has made no such declaration, but it has only been made for him, the reason urged against him has been, that he agrees not in his character and purposes with the Prophets. But all have deemed, who have persisted to have faith in him, that soon as he should assume the Name, then would he burst forth in

the splendor becoming the Son of David, and the King of Israel. The miracles he has done, and the excellence of his character and his teaching, have retained the multitude in their faith or hope, that he would not disappoint them in the end. And sure they were, that when the great and blessed day should arrive, that he should proclaim his approaching honors, the divine powers he is entrusted with would be put forth in surrounding himself and his followers with all the pomp and glory of a Kingdom, whose founder and Father is God."

"Yet," said I, "no such things have happened."

"They have not. He continues as he was. He still wanders about the land as if without home or friends, meanly apparelled, wearied with the way, and exhausted through want of food and drink, and as night approaches sleeping oftentimes beneath the open sky, or throwing himself upon the charities of those who are poor as he; consorting, moreover, by night and by day with those whom the Chiefs of the land look upon as little better than the offscouring of the earth, though indeed their chief fault is, that like us, and like Jesus, they are poor and of no repute, or like us and all, save Jesus himself, sinners."

"And you would say," I exclaimed, "shall Israel receive such an one as her King?"

"That is what I would say," he answered. "It can never be. Notwithstanding he may still perform his wonders, and notwithstanding he may remain as he has ever been, spotless in innocence as the lamb or the dove, and yet wise as the serpent, astonishing us and the multitudes by a wisdom such as we find not even in the Prophets—notwithstanding this and much more

than this, will the people reject him. And so ought they to do."

"And you?" I said.

"Alas," interposed the father, "what can we do? We would fain believe, but how can we do so, if we would remain Jews! In his goodness we believe, for never was there a holier on earth; in his wisdom we believe, for verily the wisdom of the Most High seems to be his; in his powers we believe, as powers which God has bestowed; in his mission from God we believe, for no one could do what he doth and teach as he doth, except God were with him. And more we would believe, if we could, but we see not how it can be. While he claimed but to be a prophet, we could admit his claims. But now that he claims to be the Christ and King of Israel, we admit them not, and how were it possible to do so? We are now perplexed and divided."

"Our mother," said Judas, "has not yet learned what I have now said, that Jesus is known to have claimed for himself the Kingdom. Great will be her grief and amazement, for with unfailing faith has she waited for the time when he should declare himself, and in the same hour shine forth in the glory that would then become him, and seal him the Anointed."

"Her faith," I said, "will not yield I am sure. Her love is so strong it will teach her to confide rather in him, than in her own capacity, to judge in what relates to the dispensations of God."

"That is true," said Judas. And it will be the same affection, with reverence of his character and virtues, that will cause the common people to adhere to his

cause, after, in every reasonable view, all hope is extinct. His gentleness towards all, his compassion for the suffering, together with his power to relieve those whom he pities, his love even for the sinner, for whom he ever seems to feel more than for the most righteous, seeking to turn him from his errors; the wisdom of his discourse, which he adapts by parables and feigned events to the simplest understanding; above all, the plain, intelligible doctrines he propounds so contrary to the dark sayings of the scribes,—all these things bind the people to him, so that in spite of long delay and many adverse signs, in spite of much they may not be able to explain, or reconcile in his sayings and his appearance with his claims, they will cleave to him and throng his steps. They love, and they will believe. Whatsoever may chance, there will be some who will never forsake him. Others will think and compare more, and will at least wait—before they give their faith, and before they resist and oppose. As for the Rulers and the leaders among the Pharisees, they will now have all the pretext they can desire to assail him. They will not be content, like many, to sit still and suffer time to unfold what it may—which is our part—they will seek to visit upon him the penalties of what they will call his presumption and blasphemy.”

“I can easily understand that it will be as you have said with the people, for I am sure it would be so with myself could I follow him as they are doing. Love would take place of reason, and I should have no longer power to discern between truth and error, so that it must doubtless be safer for the cause of truth that I, and others indeed, remain aloof where the eye shall keep its



uncorrupted sight, undazzled by an object too glorious for it to behold, save from a distant point. Yet has it long been my warm desire to seek Jesus and follow him, if not as a disciple, as one who would learn of any teacher the truth concerning God and virtue, life and death; and it is of these, as I hear, that he chiefly discourses."

"It is as you have been told," replied Judas; "to hear his teaching it would not be supposed that thoughts of dominion and a kingdom had ever entered his mind. Of such things, things which the multitudes who throng him never forget or lose from their thoughts, he seems not so much as to dream. Can he then be the Christ? Nay, not only of such things does he never appear to think or speak, but such things as are most opposite doth he take most pains to commend, but which can have but little attraction to the kind of people, who most follow him, and who are hoping, (against hope,) that one day, sooner or later, they shall reap a reward for their fidelity, in the new kingdom. Sure I am, he will have no such reward to bestow, even upon those, whom he has chosen as his nearest friends, and to whom he commits all his thoughts—much less upon others."

"What then," I asked, "think you it is in his purpose to bring to pass, if he aim not at any of the ends we believe to be those of the Christ?"

"Truly I cannot tell," answered Judas. "He speaks indeed of establishing a kingdom, but he seems not to mean any such kingdom as we see at present in the world, but if any, one of truth and holiness, where all should obey the Law, and he should reign over them in some new manner. No one, however, pretends to un-

derstand some of the things he sets forth, how ever simple others may be. That is admitted even by his disciples. That he hath, as I have said, declared that he is the Messiah, in plain and clear terms, I do not believe, but only that it has been gathered from phrases, which he hath employed. All, Sir, it can with certainty be affirmed of the objects which Jesus has before him, is that he aims to increase the happiness of the people by teaching them the fear of God, by showing them by the manner in which he himself lives, how they ought to live, by using the wonderful power which God has entrusted to him for their benefit, and by exposing the hypocrisies of the Pharisees, and their perversions of the Law, their false maxims and formal and heartless worship."

"These are objects," I said, "well worth living for, and, if need be, dying for, and though Jesus should not be the Christ, yet must he be esteemed one of the chief of the prophets of God."

"And a pity it is," added a younger brother, "that Jesus will not be content with this nor aim at more. Then doubtless would he carry with him the hearts of the greater and better part of the people, and make many useful changes in the doctrine and ceremonies of our worship, which we all know have been greatly corrupted by the traditions descended from former times. He would no doubt still enrage the Pharisees and the Jerusalem priests, but the rest would uphold him."

"I know not that," replied Judas. "The people are well-satisfied with the Law as it is, and has descended to us from our fathers. It may not be in all things as it was in the time of Moses—somewhat may have been added, and somewhat may have been altered; but it is

what we have all grown up under and prospered by, and why should it be changed ?”

“ We have truly grown up under it,” said the other ; “ but we seem not so plainly to have prospered, unless slavery and sin may be called prosperity. Who knows not the wickedness of the priests and rulers, and their abuses of the poor by their perversions of the Law, whereby they enrich themselves and grind the widow and the orphan to the dust ? Truly did I rejoice when Jesus cleared the temple at the Passover of another set of rogues, whose life it is to sit and suck the blood of the poor. God prosper him while he strikes at such ; and while he does no more, and lays claims to no more, God will prosper him. That he is the Christ I do not believe, nor, as I judge, ever shall.”

“ All doctrine and all law,” replied Judas, “ will be ever abused and perverted more or less ; in the case of some ignorantly, and of some with wicked intent, but from such evil we should not be rescued by overthrowing the Law itself. I would that Jesus should neither overthrow the Law, nor, as he doth, diminish its authority, but rather content himself with changing the manners and lives of the people, and teaching them the fear of God.”

Saith the father,—“ My children, let us not question the ways of one whom surely without shame we may hold as wiser than ourselves, since we doubt not that God in very deed speaks through him. We may wholly approve, moreover, of the conduct of which we see the whole and comprehend it, while, when but a little is seen, we may judge it evil. With Jesus it is, as with the providence of God. We confide in Jehovah that all

shall be well, though now and here in our human darkness and ignorance we can penetrate his ways hardly more than the blind. Let us put our trust also in Jesus, nor judge until we are able to see whither all is tending, and what its purpose and issue are. The Pharisees are enraged that he teaches in some things contrary to their interpretations of the Law, but others think that the new sayings of Jesus are in a nearer accordance with the true sense of Moses and the Prophets. Some, as here in Nazareth, are offended and ready to destroy him in that he, who is but the son of a carpenter, should pretend to teach as a prophet—among whom we also have been numbered—nor will they for this reason believe in the reality of works which their own eyes behold, but deny that they are done at all, or give them to Magic or to Devils. Where so many differ, how shall we at once discern the truth? Let us be patient and wait.”

“It were well,” I said, “if all could be persuaded to obey the advice you have given. But now that Jesus has suffered it to be known that he holds himself not only as an inspired teacher, but the Messiah of our nation, no human counsel and no mortal arm can stay the rage that will fill many souls. If the men of Nazareth were inflamed to so high a pitch of rage, that he whom they knew to be but as one of themselves should teach them, how much rather will multitudes of the leaders of the people, hungering and thirsting for the honey and manna, the wine and milk of the new Kingdom of God, be filled with envy and rage when they hear that Jesus declares himself the head of that Kingdom, and yet is to bestow upon them nought but the blessings of righteousness, peace and hope in God—no other honors, no other riches.”

The hour of repose having insensibly drawn on as we said these things, we then separated and were soon drowned in sleep.

When the morning was come, and I had worshipped with this household and eaten, and had taken leave of Joseph and his sons, who went early to begin the labors of the day, I sought Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the garden, where she sat alone.

"Young man," said she, "may the Lord bless thee and go with thee. Thou dost almost believe in Jesus, seek him if thou canst, sit with him and open thine ears with a mind willing to be convinced and thou shalt wholly believe. Yet I blame not my sons, that they withhold their faith as thou hast seen; too near are they to see aright; but, as I believe, their hearts are true, and they will not willingly do their brother a wrong."

"That," said I, "is the chief thing; it is much less surely that they should think with thee, than that they should act right. They are bound to do justly; but they must think as they can."

"So it is," rejoined the mother; "I only could desire that they followed him; then, as I think, would they trust him more, and would be with him to aid in times of danger, and the older to counsel him. For though it be that the wisdom of God dwells in him, yet doth he needlessly, as I judge, run into dangers, and stir up against him the angry passions of the Rulers and Scribes. Moreover through the zeal which consumes him, and the importunity of the multitudes who throng him with their sick folks to be healed, and whom he can never send away till he hath satisfied them, have we

deemed him as one beside himself, and have sought to draw him away, lest he should die ; but he heeds us not. If thou shouldst follow him, and join his disciples—thou wilt not—thou wilt not forsake him if thou shouldst see danger or evil to threaten ?”

“ Assuredly,” I answered, “ I will stand ready at all times to help and defend, for I believe him holy and a messenger of God, even as do his brethren ; but I do not see how it were possible I should be a follower of him, as I am already bound to Herod.”

Mary started as I said those words and exclaimed,

“ Ah, art thou then of Herod ? It is said that that wicked man pursues even the life of Jesus—as of John also. What has he done of injury to thy master ? Alas ! it is not in his heart to harm the least, or the worst thing in nature. What can set thee against him ?”

“ Fear nothing from me,” I answered, “ nor yet from Herod, if any power of mine may avail to turn aside the evil he may intend. Though I believe not in Jesus as the Christ of God, I believe he is of God and full of goodness, as thou and thy sons have said, and never shall he suffer harm if arm of mine can hinder.”

Said the mother, “ I doubt thee not, I doubt thee not. Ah ! why do I seem to doubt the providence and the arm of God, why cleave to human aid ? Had I any of the faith of our Father Abraham I should not be thus afraid, and leaning on broken reeds. Why should I fear ? Why does my mother’s heart tremble when I know that God reigneth ? Will not He, who gave me my son, and hath appointed him to this high destiny appear for and protect him by his own stretched out

arm? Shall He leave half finished the work He hath begun? Shall it be in the power of man to defeat the hopes of Israel? Shall Herod even, or Pilate lay their hand upon the Lord's anointed to do him harm—or the Priests and the Scribes in their envy? Shall not he, to whom the Lord hath thus revealed himself, though the whole land rose up against him, and Babylon herself were moved to destroy him, laugh them to scorn and over their ruin enter into his glory? I doubt it not. God, who has poured out of his Spirit in so full measure upon my son Jesus, will not leave nor forsake him, but will exalt him to the throne of his fathers, and all Israel shall confess him King."

As the mother of Jesus said these words, all her confidence and faith appeared to return; she once more forgot the mother's fond anxiety, in her sense of his union with God, and in her faith that God who had so mysteriously endowed him, would watch over him and preserve him for the ends to which he had destined him. How shall I describe the divine countenance of this fortunate mother, as she cast herself in so absolute a spirit of faith on the providence of God? I cannot. When I once more see thee, my mother, I can tell more than my pen can say.

With the affection of a mother for a child, she then gave me her blessing, "Go thy way, young man, and the blessing of Jehovah be upon thee. If it please the Lord to turn thy heart towards his Son Jesus, come hither again, and this roof shall again receive thee, and when all is accomplished for which we hope and wait, thou shalt not lose thy reward."

I then turned away, but with reluctance, and bent my

steps towards the village. Having become interested in Jesus the more, the nearer I had approached him, I desired, now that I had by so fortunate a chance beheld his parents, his family, and his home, to see also the synagogue where he had always worshipped, where he had also preached, and from the brow of the rocky precipice nigh unto which it stands, his fellow citizens had not long ago attempted, in their passion to cast him down headlong; from which miserable fate he had saved himself only by employing for his deliverance the powers of God he had so often used, never for the injury, always for the protection or deliverance of others.

Passing along through the midst of Nazareth I easily found, by following the directions I had received, the synagogue I was in search of. The doors were yet open, those who had been present at the morning prayers not having long departed. When I had entered and surveyed it, I inquired of a servant of the house for the place, near by, where the multitude had led Jesus with the purpose to destroy him. "That will I gladly show thee," he answered; "yet would it have been with more pleasure if I could have shown thee how and where they accomplished their purpose. The rocks are hard by, behind the building. Follow me." As he went before me, but slowly by reason of his halting upon a withered limb, I asked why they had sought his life?

"Thou art then a stranger in Israel?" he said. "I had taken thee for an inhabitant of these parts. Why they had sought his life? Father Abraham! That is a question for a Jew to ask. But mayhap you never heard this new prophet as he calls himself?"



I said, "No, I have never heard him, but I desire to do so greatly."

"Better not," he answered, "better not; no good would come of it. He leads many away of those who do not know him as we do."

I said I had never heard evil of him, though I had heard so much of everything else.

"At that," he said, "I marvel greatly. What is there in Israel he attacketh not? What should stand had our young Nazarene his way? What to him forsooth are Moses and the Prophets? What to him is it that the Law was given of God, and since the foundation of the world has been the glory of Israel? His own word is better! Aye, Sir, he sets aside Moses and Abraham, and the Prophets, as I do the beggarly rabble who would thrust themselves into the best seats of the synagogue. I truly, have authority in what I do. We of Nazareth would fain know what his is? It is not the men of Nazareth, who have sat and listened to the voice of the righteous Zechariah ever since the last Jubilee—the last I mean before that, that hath just passed—who will soon take their teaching from a carpenter and the son of a carpenter. We are not fallen to that, though the people of Israel do esteem us as of the kennel. Would all deal with the young zealot as was done by us, his mouth were soon stopped. Verily I believe it will now be thought that Nazareth is coming up in the world. No other place hath stood so firmly for the Law."

"Yet," said I, "you cannot deny the wonderful works which he does. What make you of them?"

"I am not obliged," he replied, "to make anything

of them. There are many ways of doing such things. Which is his way is not our matter. It is for us enough that a poor, low-born mechanic here in our town saith, or gives us to believe, that he thinks, he is the Christ! the Son of David, and King of Israel! Takes he us for those utterly devoid of understanding? Never saw I the men of Nazareth to burn so with zeal for God, as that day when in these walls, which, so many years, as I have said, have sounded to the voice of the Holy Zecharia, this young limb of Jesus sought to get the ear of the people, that he might declare himself and his foul blasphemies. No sooner found they what was his drift, than a holy and righteous anger caused them to rise as one man to purge Israel of such pollution. Furiously did the people rage, and drive him from the house on before them to this very spot—here is the place you seek, Sir,—that they might end him and his impieties at once. But he was too quick for them—or strange to say, the hands of those who stood near could not reach or touch him with all their striving, and so by his arts he escaped, and has not since sought the streets and synagogues of Nazareth—nor, as I think, ever will.”

“Methinks,” said I, “such an escape from a multitude bent upon his destruction, should convince you that God was helping him.”

“We deny not,” he answered, “his wisdom nor his works, and vain were it, truly, to deny what all ears heard, and all eyes saw; but whence he hath his power and his wisdom, as I have told thee already, each may believe as he listeth. For me, I believe God inspireth none such as those who go about to destroy what he hath before established by Moses, and set themselves

up therefore as Gods against God. Shall Jehovah build, and then himself tear down what he hath built? He will carry his teachings and his works, if Israel will not listen, to the Gentile, will he? Let him. Is that the way he shall prove himself the Christ? If there hath been a Christ promised by the Prophets, and if they have given him any office, it hath been that of one who shall exalt Israel more and more, and bring all men to bow before the Law, not one who shall degrade her in the eyes of men, and bestow equal honors and favors on the cursed Gentile. What more needed we to show, to one who hath eyes, whence he came? Did his own kindred believe in him more than we? Truly did they not. Old Joseph is a just and a devout man, and hath brought up his offspring as one who loveth the Sabbath, and the road to Zion; and I warrant you, he took not so patiently the forward conceits of his son Jesus. Verily, when he first heard that Jesus had begun to teach, he set forth to withstand him, as one whom he judged not in his right mind. Who is my son, thought the good man, that he should set up for teacher and prophet? Nor any more regard did the rest of the household have for him, so that it was not long ere he was glad to take up his lodging elsewhere. Capernaum entertaineth him now; but, as I hear, they think not much more of his doings there and over the Lake at Chorazin and at Bethsaida, than here. To tell what I think the truth of his kindred here in Nazareth, they would have borne longer with him, but that notwithstanding he possessed such powers of doing wonderful things—as at Cana to change water into wine, and doubtless to change any one thing into another,—yet

nothing would he do of that sort for the advantage of his own family, but while he was profitable to others, left them to their labor and their poverty, which, thought they, would scarcely be were our brother Messiah and King of Israel. Wherefore they give little heed to him any more, and deny him wholly."

"Not wholly," said I, "for it is within the hour that I have conversed with them."

"Then it is of late," said the other, "that they think otherwise. And I remember me, I have heard they are again, at least some of them, a little softened towards him, seeing that he has been so set upon by others, and by Herod, who, it is affirmed confidently, will soon deal with him."

Having satisfied myself with observing the place to which my guide had conducted me, and heard enough to make me believe that the Nazarenes deserved their ill repute in Judea, I left him, and returning again through the village, took my way towards Tiberias.

As I walked along and thought of all I had heard and seen, I could not but feel pity toward this teacher of Nazareth, whom all seem to allow to be not only of a life and manner entirely pure and innocent, but filled with acts of charity and love toward others; yet all seem inclined at the same time, some for one reason and some for another, to injure, or at least to refuse to him their regard and confidence. They behold his works, and confess them to have all the marks of God, yet will not believe his words. His instructions, too, are held to be laden with a divine wisdom, to be worthy of any of the Prophets of God who have gone before, yet do they fall upon hearts so little ready for them, or

stuffed with notions so contrary to them, that they are dropped by the way-side and perish—save as here and there they reach, though afar off, souls like those of Judith, Ruth, and Joanna, when they sink in and are held as the heart's truest treasure. But when, with all my pity, I ask how it could be otherwise? I find myself obliged to say, I know not; I cannot see. Were it not that Jesus gives himself out, though not plainly, but obscurely and covertly as it were, for Messiah, sure I am, his virtues would secure the homage of all save the baser spirits among the priesthood. But while he claims so much, and yet lives as he does the life of a wanderer, in poverty and want, with publicans and fishermen for his only circle of friends and advisers, it cannot be otherwise than that so manifest a discordance between what he appears, and yet claims to be, should turn all against him. As I have before said, I have trusted that I might behold in him the marks, and all the marks, we look for in him whom we expect—and find him to be more than a prophet; but with what I learn now, I see not how the life and office of Messiah can consist with either the maxims he declares, or the life he leads. But time will show.

Prolonging, by much devious wandering, my way, I did not until nightfall reach the outskirts of Tiberias. The sun was just sinking behind the western hills as I entered the gates of the palace.

I found refreshment of every kind, for the soul and the wearied body, at the hospitable board of Joanna. She rejoiced greatly that I had seen those who were so well acquainted with the life and teachings of Jesus, though she grieved also that I had not found Jesus

himself. This young woman is wholly possessed and swayed by the idea of this prophet. Of a devout mind, she has found only in Jesus such food for her soul as she desires. She knows not how better than others to explain his conduct; she only trusts that with patience and forbearance on the part of the people all expectations will be satisfied. Willingly would she follow him as one of his disciples, and doubts not she should find all she looks for, notwithstanding that some, as she had learned, of those who were nearest to him, have abandoned him. "How would Chuza," I asked, "agree to such a choice on your part?"

"Chuza," she answered, "much as he honors the Law and the synagogue, honors such virtue as this that is seen in Jesus more, and though for himself he has no hope of Jesus, or faith in him as Israel's Christ, yet he doubts not his worthiness, and would never deny me my own belief whatever it may be."

She looks with impatience towards the Feast of Tabernacles, when she shall go up to Jerusalem, and once more listen to his teaching. In the mean time she has collected from every quarter largely of his sayings, on which she feeds by night and day. She entreats me also to read, and, that I may do so, promises to place them in my hands.

When, on the following day, I was summoned to an interview with Herod, it was determined that with no more delay than should be needful first, to see Beth-Harem again, I should set out for Rome. So that after visiting the house of Onias, I shall soon be on my way toward the capital of the world; a place which but so little while ago I left with pain not to be described, and

which now, but for thee, my mother, I should never willingly behold again. This letter will hardly be read, ere I myself shall sit at your side.

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In agreement with the prediction which closes the foregoing epistle, it was not many days before I parted from Herod in Tiberias and set forth for Beth-Harem, nor did I tarry long there, ere I again set forth and crossing over to Cæsarea, took ship for the Tiber.

While in Beth-Harem I learned that Onias continued absent in the southern part of the country, not only performing trusts committed to him by Herod, but also making use of every means thrown in his way, or which he could devise, to increase his knowledge of Jesus, and become acquainted with his true character and designs. For this purpose he had visited Jerusalem, and at the Passover had sought Jesus and followed him north as far as Samaria, hearing him and witnessing his works, when he again returned to Idumea, but with the resolve at the approaching feasts of the Pentecost and Tabernacles, again to seek the capital and watch his course.

Of Zadok, Judith informed me, that he had grown each day more fierce in his opposition toward all who were inclined to put their faith in either John or Jesus, that he had joined himself with other leading Pharisees in other parts of Peræa and Judea, whose object was to make or find occasion to accuse them of such offences against the Law and the Roman power as should cause them to be imprisoned, or else to stir up the people to some act of violence. He had also used language, which

showed that they who were bold enough, contrary to the counsels of such as himself, to believe in Jesus, should be cast out of the synagogue, and suffer besides whatever evils might be inflicted upon them by the believing and the devout. He had become, since I had left Beth-Harem, exceedingly mad ; and in the towns round about, in Jericho and in Jerusalem had bound himself by solemn oaths to others of the same sect and the same temper, to purge the land, as they say, of blasphemers. It would not be easy, Judith thought, for Jesus to elude the watchfulness of these men, and the devices they would put in practice, to impute to him such acts, or such opinions, as would rouse against him the passions of the people, and excite also the suspicions of the Roman government.

I visited the abode of the leper where I found all the comfort possible to those who had been overtaken by such misfortunes. Ruth had sought diligently for all the intelligence she could procure of Jesus, and the opinions he had promulgated, of his character, life, and works, and from all that she could learn had become persuaded that he was in truth the Prophet who should come into the world. But especially was she guided by her conversations with Judith, and by the knowledge derived from the sayings of Jesus, of which from various quarters the daughter of Onias, like Joanna, had collected a large store. These served to convince her, as she said, that Jesus was too holy and pure to make any pretensions that were not founded in truth ; it was impossible, that he who could advocate the cause of God and the most exalted virtue in such a manner, borne out by such a life, could be false in any part of his conduct. If, therefore,



he had declared himself to be the Messiah, she believed him; and however much at variance his appearance, and much of his language might be with what was looked for in that Prince, she could not doubt that in the event he would vindicate all that he had uttered or done, and stand justified before the Jewish people. "How can such works as his," she exclaimed, "be done but by the power of the Most High? Who would not tremble to give them to an evil spirit? And how can one, whom the Spirit of God is with, by wonders so astonishing, speak otherwise than as the same Spirit of God shall direct? Shall Jesus, by the touch of his hand, do the works of God, and at the same time by the words of his mouth utter lies which are of the Devil? It cannot be. As Jesus is reported to have said, 'the same vine beareth not bad fruit and good fruit, the same spring sends not forth salt water and fresh, the waters of Genesareth and those of the Dead Sea.' I believe, then, that, because Jesus has declared that he is the Messiah of God, or even, because he permits the people to believe that he is, therefore he is that person, nor shall any Zadok have power to pluck this faith out of my heart."

In reply to this, I said that I could not for myself, believe until I saw. When Jesus openly in the eyes of the nation assumed the name and the place, which, as the king of the Jews, belonged to him, I would acknowledge him and forsake every other; but in no other event. I required the evidence of my eye and ear; the correspondence of Jesus to the prophecies. Everything in the manner of life, the character, and maxims of Jesus was against the probability that he was the Christ, and in its favor only his declaration—if in truth he had ever made

such declaration, for it could not be shown beyond a doubt that he had—that he was so, and his power of working miracles. I must have more than this. When he will listen to the importunities of those who throng him, of some of the wisest and most powerful in the land, and stand openly and publicly forth, then it will be time enough for one who would be governed by more than his fancies, to bend the knee and follow him.

Ruth I found, however, too firm a believer to be shaken by anything I could say, either in earnest, or simply by way of dispute. Not Judith herself is of a firmer faith. She is fully bent upon going up to the Feast of Tabernacles, when it shall come, and taking with her her father, that if she can obtain the favor of Jesus, he may possibly be healed. Of this her heart is now fullest. Long ere this would she have sought his presence, but that Levi has refused steadfastly, saying, that a life like his was not worth the prolonging, seeing that for so many years he had been shut out from the knowledge and affections of all who once knew him. His Ruth had now found those who loved and would care for her, though he were away, it was all he wanted; and fain would he be now away and at rest. He would not, even as Job had said before him, ‘live away.’ But to such things, Ruth made replies that have touched his heart too tenderly to be withstood, and she has obtained his consent to go up to the Feast, unless Jesus should first perchance come into the Peræa. They were to go up in company with Judith.

When I had thus remained not many days in Beth-Harem, I departed for Rome. At Cæsarea, I did not fail, as soon as I arrived, to seek out the Greek Zeno, to

whom I owed so much. He was rejoiced to see me, and with great satisfaction went over the events of the few but disastrous days I had passed in that capital. He at once drew me with him, with quick consent on my part, to the ancient site of the synagogue, and the house of the widow of Sameas. The tower for the collossus of Tiberius I found to have rapidly sprung up and nearly at its intended height. The ruins of the house of the widow of the wine merchant still blackened the ground, and bore testimony to the violence that had been committed. It needed not much aid from the fancy to believe, as I wandered among them, as the shadows of evening were falling, that the forms of Anna and Philip were to be seen among the tossing branches of the trees, or flitting among the fallen columns and crumbling walls, their voices mingling with the sighings of the wind as it swept over them. It was not easy to depart from a spot still so beautiful in itself, and where so many objects served to remind me of those whom I in so short a time had come to love so well, and from whom I had been so violently separated. As I turned away, sad with such recollections, I inquired of Zeno if it was known where now the widow of Sameas was dwelling. "In the capital," he answered, "of Philip, whither she had at first fled. Deeming it more for her safety that the place of her retreat should be known to none save a few of those to whom she had entrusted her private affairs, she had strictly concealed it until within a brief space when it had come to be well understood in Cæsarea, that her home was in Cæsarea Philippi. But at the same time it was affirmed that she was about to remove to Rome, where, if rumor deceive not," added Zeno, "thou wilt

doubtless find her on thy arrival. Procla would gladly have recalled her to her ancient home, and have caused her dwelling to be rebuilt, but with all her address, she could not in this overcome the obstinacy of Pilate; who professed to entertain apprehensions of new difficulties, if any more lenity were shown toward those who had in any degree been parties to that revolt, but in truth he was governed by his avarice, which could not spare the gains which by the sale of so valuable an estate would flow into his purse."

These things being so, having seen Zeno, and visited the spots so dear to memory, I set sail with a fair wind for Italy, and without any adverse events reached its shores in safety. My mother I found as I had left her, and with her, now her companion and inseparable friend, the mother of Philip and Anna. Our tears flowed afresh as we recounted the events of those few fatal days, which deprived a mother of her only children and robbed me of one, whose image ever floats before me and can never be supplanted by another.

When the first cares of arriving after so long an absence were over, and I had once more traversed the streets of Rome with every stone of which, owing to the activity of my youth, I had familiar acquaintance, and by such pilgrimages had revived a thousand recollections, partly agreeable and partly painful, I turned to the affairs which had brought me so far, and sought the presence of Sejanus. Yet before I conversed with him, and had only gathered the knowledge concerning him to be had for the asking, at the corner of any of the streets of Rome, I discovered that all the reliance upon him on the part of Herod was that of a person upon a phantom

or shadow. For I found, that though the form of Sejanus was to be seen about the streets, in the Forum, in the Senate-house, and in his own sumptuous palace, having the same outward shape as ever, yet it now appeared and departed without, as it were, being noted whether it came or went, the people and the nobles offering no longer that worship which had once been paid as to a god. I found in a word, that the sun of Sejanus was overclouded and about to set—that the word had gone out from Capreæ, and this man, who so little while ago, held all Rome and the world in the hollow of his hand, was, though still glittering in all the wonted trappings of his high place, of no more weight in the minds of men than a poor painted player-king with his tinsel robes and paper crown. Letters, dark and mysterious, have come from the Emperor to the Senate, which while they still salute Sejanus with the titles that have ever been lavished upon him, leave it not to be misunderstood by any who are not as blind as the favorite himself, that suspicions have been wakened in the breast of Tiberius, that native home of distrust and jealousy, which never can be removed but by the destruction of the miserable man against whom they have been raised. The steps of him, who so lately stood almost within the circle of the throne itself, are now dogged by spies and informers, who report every word and look and movement to the gloomy tyrant who will not long be without a pretext for his accusation. When the blow would fall, it was not easy to conjecture, as a plausible or popular ground must be found for extreme proceedings. In the mean time, as I have said, so far as could be judged by the

apparent honor and power of the minister, he held the same rank as ever in the estates of Rome.

When I sought him, and by credentials with which I had been furnished, made known the authority under which I approached him, and the objects I had in view as the messenger of Herod, it did not surprise me that I was received, and the projects and proposals of Herod considered with the same care and interest as if he were still in the plentitude of his power, and kings and kingdoms hung upon his word. So insensible was he to his true position, or so insensible did he choose to appear, that I was almost ready to believe the rumors in the city were false, and that a terrible retribution awaited the inhabitants for the slights they had of late shown this second-hand tyrant. A little reflection, however, convinced me that my first impressions were right, and that my interview with Sejanus was a mere empty form—a scene in a comedy, or shall I rather say a comic scene in a tragedy. It could be followed by no act on his part. His promises were, indeed, many and reiterated, of lending to Herod all the support of which he had formerly spoken, but they were like the promises of a man who—as the possessed person in the Old Prisons of Beth-Harem—though clothed in rags, yet imagines himself in possession of the riches of Solomon.

No sooner had I terminated this interview, and sought further information of the truth in regard to Sejanus from those who well knew both the Emperor and the parasite, than I wrote to Herod, laying before him, borne out by incontestable evidence, the account of the actual state of political affairs, and the failing power of the once great minister. I assured him that the depend-

ing upon aught from Sejanus, either in the way of money or forces, was vain ; that so far from possessing any influence in Rome, so as to attempt any such movement now, as might, perhaps, with much probability of success, have been attempted a year before, he was at present little more than a private individual, whom all looked upon as fallen under the displeasure and suspicions of Tiberius, and destined to speedy ruin ; that whatever it was in his purpose to do in Judea must be done with his own strength, unless, relinquishing his plans concerning Herodias, he could bind himself in league with the kings of Arabia and Parthia ; that, however, although nothing was to be looked for in Rome from political union, yet much was to be expected from the men of wealth among the Jewish population, which was large in numbers, and, as he knew, distinguished for the riches they had amassed. To these, if it were his pleasure, I would devote myself, and engage them to lend of their abundance to the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel ; and it was not to be doubted, so constantly were their eyes directed that way, and their hopes to one day returning and dwelling in their native land beneath the power of their own King, in the new age that should unfold, that they would be impatient to bestow in proportion to their substance, to secure that great and glorious end. These with other things I communicated to the Tetrarch not many days after I had been in Rome.

The letter which I thus despatched proved to be the termination of my intercourse with Herod, for upon receiving it and thereby learning beyond any further doubt that hopes of alliance with Rome against herself

could no longer be indulged, and that in consequence any immediate action was rendered impossible, he turned toward that other project which he had never honestly abandoned, the marriage with Herodias, and the divorce of the daughter of Aretas. He, indeed, wrote to me after receiving the letter I had sent, and in it he hoped that I would continue to be engaged in his affairs in the manner I had proposed, and if I could not derive any longer advantage from Sejanus, to do what I could with the Jewish inhabitants. But it was not long after this that in a letter from Judith and Onias I learned that he was bent upon accomplishing his designs with the wife of Herod Philip. When this was made known to me, I at the same moment abandoned his cause, not being able to persuade myself that prosperity could attend the measures of one who should openly put from him the fear of God; nor being ready to take any part in the injury of two men so holy as John and Jesus, for the advantage of one so wicked as Herod. The necessity thus laid upon me of suddenly withdrawing from an enterprise to which I had now so long bound myself, of whose success, wisely conducted, I could not doubt, with the success of which I deemed the glory of Israel to be so closely interwoven, gave me no little pain, and I could not for a time but hope and almost believe that Herod would return to himself, and, repenting of his evil designs, resume on his own strength the undertaking he had so foolishly postponed to the gratification of his passions. But what I soon learned from Judith put an end to all such expectations. She thus wrote.

“Now, Julian, let me trust that you will finally and without reserve abandon the affairs of Herod, when I



shall inform you further of the course he has pursued. Never have I been able, notwithstanding all the efforts of Onias and all the reasonings and persuasions of his nephew of Rome, to entertain other opinion of Herod than that which I have often expressed. I believe that you will now join yourself in judgment to me, and think of him even as I do; yet of my father, I lament to say it, have I no hope that he will ever be separated from one to whom he seems bound by a spell cast over him by evil spirits, rather than by reasons which his own mind has weighed and can calmly justify.

“It is not easy to say why it was so, but certain it is, that your presence was a restraint upon the Tetrarch. It may have been because he stood in some dread of your plain speaking, or, which is more likely, because he hoped to derive advantages through your means he could secure in no other way so well. No sooner were you gone, than as if he had been relieved of some load, or had escaped from some painful obligation, he gave himself at once to the passion which many asserted he had mastered, and not only resorted immediately to Jerusalem, but entertained Herodias in the most open manner in his own palace in Tiberias. This was followed by consequences easily foreseen—the sudden departure of the daughter of Aretas for her father’s court, and letters breathing vengeance and war from the insulted king. These things coming, as could not be otherwise, to the ears of John, he proclaimed publicly the wickedness of the Tetrarch, and denounced him to the people as a despiser and transgressor of the Law, and one who through the violence and wickedness of his passions was about to bring all the evils of war upon

his country. But, alas! he spoke into the ears of the deaf, and to hearts too corrupted by the like iniquities to be touched by the admonitions of that stern but righteous man. They heard him, but heeded him not. Enough were found of the same stamp with the King, who in his condemnation by the prophet had heard also their own, to carry to his ears a report of all he had said, which inflaming the King to a high pitch of rage he sent out his soldiers, seized John, and hurried him off to the dungeons of Machærus, where he has since been strictly confined, and out of which it is not difficult to see he will never come. Herod, indeed, hath some fear and even reverence of him,—for with all his vice, he stands in dread not only of invisible spirits of evil, but of spirits of good also, of everything that is mysterious and obscure,—and, therefore, he might release him when his end was once gained, and for the reason also that he may apprehend commotions among those of the people who hold John to be a prophet; but if such should be the inclinations of his own—not merciful but—cowardly heart, there will be none such in the bosom of her to whom he will now ally himself, who hath long treasured up her anger against the bold peasant who has dared to thrust himself in between Princes and the accomplishment of whatever designs they may please to entertain, and hath been one cause at least of so long a postponement of an event, which she even more than Herod has sought to compass. We doubt not with the next arrival of news from Jerusalem to hear of their adulterous marriage.

“Of Jesus we learn that few miracles have of late been wrought, but that he employs himself in preaching

in the synagogues, the truths which he conceives to be most essential, and in which the differences are to be discerned between what he holds to be best, and the ancient Law of Moses. But so far as I have learned he seems to be rather a restorer of the Law to its true significance, and a rebuker of prevailing corruptions and abuses of it than one who would overthrow and destroy it, of which purpose some fail not to accuse him."

I often at this time received letters from Judith informing me of the progress of Jesus and of the oppositions he encountered, and of herself seeking him in Galilee and becoming a constant follower and hearer. Of her own opinions at this time—the period just going before the Feast of Tabernacles—I gathered that, with the common people, she received him with an undoubting faith as the Messiah. "The Pharisees," she says, "are exceedingly bitter against him, and by the power they hold in their hands they deter many from following him, and confessing themselves disciples. But the lower sort, who have nothing to lose, neither place nor estimation, laugh at these tyrants, and crowd about him gladly and fearlessly. I consort with these; sit and hear with them, and believe with them. They doubt not, and how should I doubt, that Jesus will prove all we wish and all we want; since it is impossible for those who will see and hear him to associate deceit with him, or any purpose or design other than those which he plainly avows. Now he declares that he hath come from God, that the prophets have foreshown him as he who is to come, that the Kingdom of God is shortly to make its appearance and be established, and that he is the Christ who shall reign over the new Kingdom. Can it be otherwise than so,

since he has declared it? I think not. And oh, how peaceful and hallowed a people would they be over whom Jesus shall reign as King! How different he from the other kings of the earth! with what new honors will he crown the good, with what new terrors will he strike the wicked! In his teaching he ever invests with the highest praise the virtues of sincerity, contentment, gentleness, chastity, and kindness toward all. Shall not his own government proceed upon the maxims which he has thus publicly proclaimed as those which are to be considered superior over all others? How certainly then, if these things shall be so, will wars and contentions cease, and violent and ambitious men no longer be among those who shall rule in Israel, and the soft delights of peace, and justice and mutual deeds of love, and the sincere worship of God, and the observance of the Law unperverted by the traditions of the elders, honored and exalted in the eyes of all, cover the earth and make it as a delightful garden before the Lord! Why, why does Jesus thus delay to assume the place that is his, and lay the foundations of the Kingdom whose approach he has so plainly announced? The power with which God has entrusted him must be amply sufficient to make his way plain before him, and obtain an easy conquest over whatever opposition his enemies, the Pharisees and the Council, might array against him. It is this delay that disheartens many, causes others to doubt, some to despair, and not a few to abandon him; for, say they, we can see no reason why he should any longer refuse to do what so many urge upon him. We have seen miracles enough, we have left our homes to follow him, and we now are impatient for the consummation, and

think we have a right to demand it. But others say, if such an one as Jesus is to reign in Israel, then as he is to govern by rules and maxims so different from those of other Princes, it must be necessary to lay deep among the people a right preparation. They must be brought to expect and to desire not such a state of things as has existed under Herod and other former kings, but such as he has constantly predicted as to constitute that which is to be now founded, and this can be done only by often and to the whole people of Judea, in one place as well as in another, from the west to the east, and from the north to the south, declaring the principles on which it is to be conducted, and obtaining the willing assent of all hearts. I do not say, Julian, that there are not misgivings among even such as these, and that they are not often startled and alarmed, and made to doubt by words which Jesus uses, by slights put upon the chief men of the nation, by his free departures from the common practices of the most devout, and dark intimations that he himself is destined rather to suffer future evils than to reign as a Prince. But these moments and causes of apprehension or doubt, are as nothing in comparison with the deep foundations of our hope. For myself, could I well be content—which Onias ever ascribes to my Samaritan descent—were Jesus to be no other than a teacher and reformer,—a preacher of righteousness, and a restorer of the Law. Yet am I at the same time ready to acknowledge that I look with greater expectations of good to Israël—of greater good than could otherwise accrue—which Jesus could effect were he not only prophet but king also. How would he then stand above all others a just model for all the princes of the

earth! a God among men, of whom the true worship should be copying and displaying his virtues, receiving and practising the righteous principles of his government! And in saying this, confound me not with those who throng the steps of Jesus but with expectations of some advantage so soon as he shall proclaim himself, and who think not of him or his future kingdom as differing from other thrones and other monarchs from whom flow honors, powers, and riches, save that from Jesus these shall flow in fuller streams, and overspread the whole land of Judah and Israel. If I believe him King, it is a King, the foundations of whose throne shall be righteousness, and its inscription, 'Holiness unto the Lord;' whose office it shall be as the Lord's Anointed, not more to subdue the enemies of Israel, than to exalt the Law in the eyes of men, and cause it to be obeyed of every soul, and presently to gather all nations of the earth under its sway."

Thus wrote Judith in one out of very many epistles which, while I dwelt in Rome, I constantly received—all of them together presenting a very exact account of the doings of Jesus and the conduct and opinions of the people during that period. I would willingly have returned and passed this interval in Judea, but affairs of my mother, together with her unwillingness so soon to part with me again, kept me in Rome. But though in Rome, the state of Judea, and the works and teaching of Jesus, were with me the things of chiefest interest, and with the most of our people also, to whom I communicated freely of all the information I received. Not less than myself, many in a greater degree, were they roused and inflamed with the hopes excited by the miracles of

Jesus, not doubting that he was the promised king, and would soon establish his reign. Not a few made every preparation which at a distance could be made—converting their estates into gold and precious stones—to remove from Rome to Judea as soon as the final elevation of Jesus should scatter every remaining doubt. They were indeed filled with wonder at the same things which caused so much doubt and dismay to the most devoted and devout Jews at home. They could not interpret his humble origin and mean and lowly condition, nor many of the doctrines which were imputed to him, but neither on the other hand could they interpret his astonishing powers except he were the Son of God. And thus a vague hope, notwithstanding many adverse signs kept its place in their minds, and with every arrival of news from Jerusalem or Beth-Harem, they would look to have it confirmed by some new and more decisive event.

As for the Romans of the better sort, if they heard at all of the affairs of Judea, and the strange events given birth to there, it was only as of some story of magical illusion, or demon power, or some superstition of a people ever prone to wonder, and whose early history, as their own, abounded with many relations of a similar kind, and so they gave little heed to any of the accounts which from time to time reached their ears. Some indeed, who were more careful to distinguish things that differ, and not to take all that is like for the same, of whom there are ever but a few, thought that in Jesus there was somewhat which exalted him far above ordinary mortals, and which ranked him justly among divine beings; they doubted not he was a God, descended for

great purposes among men. Such opinions it was well known that the Emperor himself entertained ; and to decide in matters of this sort, as, indeed, any question that called for the exercise of a shrewd and discerning judgment, no man in Rome was more competent than Tiberius. He possessed wonderful powers also of confounding a plain matter ; but that was because he loved, and had some reason why he wished, to perplex the reader or hearer. He eagerly sought for all intelligence concerning the Prophet as it arrived, and did much by his inquiries and his conversation to spread abroad among the higher classes a knowledge of what was going on in our remote and despised country.

Although I heard so fully of affairs in Judea, through Judith, yet it was not until after the Feast of Tabernacles that so much as a word came to me from Onias. When that festival was over, and Onias, Judith, and Ruth had again returned from the city to their homes, I at length received a letter from him, of which I here preserve the greater part.

“ Long ago,” says Onias, “ did I purpose to write and give thee such information as I had gathered concerning the affairs of the King in this part of Israel, but my devotion to them hath been such as to leave little power for other things ; but beside this a greater hindrance still hath grown—how wilt thou marvel !—out of my following after Jesus, whose steps I have closely pursued with but brief intervals of absence since I first left Beth-Harem for Idumea. Yet though thy first thought, Julian, may be one of surprise and wonder, thy second will be one of approval. For ought not they who would



in so great a matter arrive at a judgment which their own minds shall afterwards justify, and which shall be in accordance with the truth of things, to seek the knowledge necessary for its foundation at the springs where it is to be found most abundant and most pure? Wherefore I determined, that whereas I had up to the day when I left Beth-Harem, received all my knowledge of Jesus through the reports of others, and the rumors which were spreading over the country of whose origin and authority none could give any account, I would no longer in such a matter trust to what might be error or falsehood, but myself resort to Jesus or his disciples and become a patient learner of the truth.

“Thou knowest how at Beth-Harem I had ever laid a restraint upon the holy Zadok, when in his zeal for the Law and our chosen Head he was prompt on all occasions to revile the very name of Jesus and his followers, never doubting them to be deceivers, children of the Devil, and that so they would be proved in the end. I was not willing that one, who as it was reported to us, was so full of a divine spirit, whose life was so innocent, whose annunciation had been attended by such signs, whose own works were so astonishing, should be judged as it were in darkness, by such as had never for themselves sought the light, which for the seeking was easily to be had. For myself, moreover, I now confess it, it seemed to me that if all was true that was brought to our ears, there was a likelihood, almost bordering upon certainty, that this Galilean Prophet was in truth the expected Prince, veiling, for purposes which had not been explained, but were well capable to be explained, his greatness, and concealing himself under the humble

guise and condition of a servant. Hardly was Judith herself more moved toward Jesus, than I. It was accordingly with great expectations that such favorable judgments would be established, and that as a consequence thereof I should abandon the cause of Herod, as thou hast now rashly done, that when I had reached Idu-mea, I determined within myself to go up to Jerusalem at the Passover, for it was rumored that Jesus would be there.

“I went. Jesus came, as it was predicted he would do, I saw and heard him, I followed him from Jerusalem into the country round about in Judea, then into Samaria and Galilee, thence to Jerusalem again at the Pentecost and Tabernacles, and am now returned even as I came forth from Beth-Harem, more than ever a Jew and a Herodian? The man of Nazareth has made no disciple of the Vine-dresser of Jordan—who, as ever, is a follower of Moses and the Prophets, and through them a believer in the Redemption of Israel, and the new Kingdom of God. This faith and this hope shall no man take from me.

“But was it at once, Julian, that I sifted out truth from error? and was it an easy task? Was the way smooth, with no yawning pits of danger and death, where the foot slipped in darkness? It was quite otherwise. I have escaped, yet as those who have passed through the fire, as those who have been snatched as Daniel from the jaws of the lion. There was that in Jesus that drew me towards him, as it were with cords of iron and bands of steel, and there bound me; and like the foolish multitude I had well nigh been held fast in the disloyal captivity. The same affections, which

forcibly took possession of their hearts, were making their entrance into mine also, whether I would or not. And now when I look about me and perceive that through the good providence of God I am rescued while the multitudes of the people are yet in bonds I wonder, while I rejoice. For, as I have said, there is that in Jesus, which attracts and binds as by some magic force. Yea, such power, mysterious and not to be withstood, is seen to flow out even from the very countenance and form! I first beheld him as he sat teaching in the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, and sure I am my eyes never fell upon a human form of such majesty yet also of such graciousness. What was great and manly prevailed by a large excess over what was only fair in both the shape and the features of the countenance, yet upon these the eye rested with delight for their exceeding comeliness, but much more for the expressions of love toward all, which shot forth in every look and every motion. He seemed ever as if anxious to know the wants, and read the language which spoke in the faces of the humblest of the people who surrounded him, and who without encouragement would be slow to approach freely one so endowed. Accordingly when he was speaking to them, and as much when he was not, his eyes were roving over the crowds and his form bent towards them, rarely at any time sinking back into himself, or seeming as if there were any interest to engage him separate from theirs. But at such times as this happened, then a shade of sadness settled over his face, showing that oppressive thoughts were passing through his mind, which there were none to whom he could make them known, in order by counsel

or sympathy to divide the burden. In truth he was not seen ever to communicate with another, not even his chosen companions, as we are wont to do with those to whom we commit the whole of ourselves as to another self, in the knowledge that we shall be received aright, and that whatsoever is in us we may with freedom impart. This indeed was not surprising; for although they who approached him, even for the first time, immediately perceived that benignity and a fraternal spirit predominated in his character, and were beaming forth from his face, yet who, when they considered what mysterious alliances bound him to God and invisible spirits, could ever sit or converse with him as with another; could ever feel toward him but as a messenger and servant of Jehovah, in whom dwelt his spirit and his power! Who could consort with him as an equal and a companion? Wherefore, wherever he is seen in the city or in the fields, thronged by the multitudes, or pursuing his way from the city to the seclusion of the Mount of Olives or of Bethany, at a feast or in the house of mourning, does he seem ever and equally alone, as if not among the people at large had he found those with whom he could contract a friendship, which had been denied by the members of his own household.

“There being, in addition to all I have said, the appearance of truth and honesty in Jesus, and openness too which convinced the observer, that nothing was kept back from the people which he had power to communicate, or which it concerned them to know, and a readiness to hear both the inquiries and the objections which any who approached had to propose, with a gentleness, and a compassionate regard for all that gave

assurance of a kind reception, even to women and children, if they could so far overcome the natural feelings of awe as to draw nigh to him, I have to acknowledge, Julian, that when I had once seen him and heard his discourse, I was as one bound to him; every feeling of the heart without any will of my own was freely his, and for a time I felt as if I too should number myself among his followers. I could not leave him. Wherever he was, there was I also. I sought him in the temple, I joined the crowds that thronged him in the streets as soon as he was seen; day and night I followed him through the cities and villages round about Jerusalem, often without shelter or food, that I might lose none of the doctrine he taught, or fail to behold the wonders wrought by his hand. I was drawn along by a power I could not resist, the all attractive power of wisdom and goodness. Not a Jew in the land, not one of Jesus's own disciples was a more constant and devoted follower than I.

“But what now? you ask. Have I given to Jesus my allegiance? Do I find in him the King of Israel? the Saviour for whom we wait! Not more, Julian, than in John! Yet for his virtues I would that Jesus were he, that he gave other signs than those he now gives that God hath sent him to fill that high office. But how vain the wish! For though in Jesus be seen many of the qualities and graces which would fit him for that trust, yet of others he possesseth not one. The love of those with whom he had to do certainly he would gain, and by that bond would he hold them in his service—which is simply the service of holiness. But utterly devoid as he is of those higher qualities

which would fit him for Israel's King and Deliverer, never would he draw toward him the perfect confidence of our people. They will follow him and hear him, as I have done, for the graciousness of his words and the strange attractions of his presence. They will witness his works and stand astonished at a power, so far beyond that of mortal man. But when he requires their faith in him as Christ, they will withhold it as I have done—they will draw back and, notwithstanding their love and their admiration, will abandon him, some doubting whether he be in his right mind, some holding him a deceiver, others a minister of Beelzebub, others perplexed at least, and not knowing how or what to think.

“As it is with the character of Jesus and the outward appearance, so is it with the doctrine he preaches; at first, and in many things it captivates and charms, but afterwards those things are observed which not only agree not with, but oppose the very existence of that Kingdom for which we look and pray; so that I have even conceived that he aimeth secretly to make hostile the heart of the people toward it. They of Rome are our enemies, yet he teacheth us to love them! They have enslaved and injured us, he would have us for this evil to do them benefits! Israel can be exalted only as she shall triumph over this modern Babylon. Jesus teaches peace, and threatens that such as use the sword for conquest, or dominion, or revenge, shall by the justice of God be doomed to perish by the sword! Israel can rise to her ancient glory only as she shall covet glory, and honor, and a kingdom, and as her children shall in these things aspire to be what their fathers

were, but Jesus teaches that they who follow him must seek after none of these things, but choose rather to serve others and be in obedience. If we, Julian, have read the Prophets aright, the Messiah, and they who shall join themselves to him, will reap the natural rewards of those who deliver their country from oppression and invest her with power and dominion; but Jesus declares that they who follow him must look only to deny themselves any such expectations, and to prepare themselves rather for sufferings and adversities, than for the enjoyments and honors we are accustomed to regard as our fitting recompense. And, moreover, while the zealous Jew, the descendant of Abraham, the disciple of Moses, hath been trusting that under the Christ he would be more than ever established, and the Gentile held as utterly accursed and alien before the Lord, Jesus hath more than hinted, he hath in his teachings plainly declared that henceforth all shall be alike before God!—whom he even speaks of and addresseth, not as the God of Israel but the Father of all, not more disposed to crown Israel with peculiar honors than any other people that will keep the laws of righteousness!

“What think you of these things, Julian, which I have heard many times and oft from the lips of Jesus, and which in various form make up the burden of his teaching? Are they the truths we look for from the Restorer of Israel? Do they become the Deliverer—him of whom the Prophets have spoken as King of Israel in her restoration, even as God himself was her King of old? Thou thinkest even as I, and wonderest not that I turn from him—yea, and as thou wilt behold, against him. For excellent as are other truths that he

delivers, and irreproachable as is his life, yet is it not plain to one who looks around, that it is the necessary effect of his teaching to indispose the people toward the true Messiah, to plant in their minds notions and errors not compatible with his coming and exaltation? Greatly more than John, does Jesus throw obstacles in the way, not only of Herod, but of any other, if Herod be not he, whom God may send to accomplish our salvation. Wherefore, it grows to an obligation, whose force I feel more and more, as I hear more of Jesus and witness more of his power over the people, to oppose him, and if it may be separate the multitudes from him. To this work henceforth do I give myself; and if it should be said, behold the righteous zeal with which Onias resisteth Jesus!—it may then be replied at the same time, that if he stirs himself with zeal for the cause of God it is not in ignorance that he doth it, for than he no one more constantly followed after the steps of Jesus, and listened to him more patiently. But, who was he, to suffer his private affection for this wonderful man, to stand between him and what he owed to the law, to Israel and to the God of Israel?

“By other things also, have I been at first troubled and confounded, but at last strengthened in this resistance I purpose of Jesus. When soon after you, Julian, had set forth for Tiberius, and I for Idumea, I sought, and listened to the teaching of Jesus, I found that which I expected, a prophet of God clothed with powers, such as I believe were never before, save unto Mosès, granted to a mortal man. The people about me took him for the Son of God, and King of Israel—no less. And truly when I either listened to his wisdom or witnessed



his wonderful works, I too thought him for those reasons, at least well worthy to be He whom God was at this time to send into the world. But then other things caused doubt. Why, if he was the Christ, did he not openly and with a loud voice so declare himself? Whom should he fear? Were he the Christ indeed, who would receive him so gladly as the Jews of every sect? Even Herod would have laid aside his hostility, would he have but assumed the state that should mark the Christ. Was it the Romans he should fear? What were they to one whose arm was the arm of God? They truly would have had a controversy with one who claimed of them the sovereignty of Israel. But could not he, at whose word the son of the widow of Nain came forth from the grave, summon forces before which those of any earthly power must fail? Were Jesus the Christ, why when we have urged him to do so hath he steadfastly refused to give a sign, which we could not doubt, that he was so—a sign in the Heavens, or in enterprises he should set on foot, or in those demonstrations of kingly rank and power to which not one would refuse his faith? These he hath not given, but mocked our urgency with the figure of Jonah, who having been three days in the whale, so he in like manner should be three days in the centre of the earth—a riddle which none can read. Jesus, moreover, hath violated the requirements of the Law, setting it at naught, which he who came to restore and magnify the Law could never do. The Sabbath is to him as another day for the freedom with which he sets aside its requirements in favor of that which he may wish to do, saying, that its observance should bend to many of the necessities of man

—which truly many a Hebrew is already without instruction, prone enough to do—but from the Messiah we should look to see its observance, as of all the Law, carried to a higher pitch, and men taught how they may keep it even with the zeal of Ben Ezra of Cæsarea, or Zadok of Beth-Harem, yet without hollowness or hypocrisy. Why doth he cast contempt upon the Pharisees, the council, the chief men, the elders of Israel?—among whom if there be some wicked, there are many righteous, and on whom, he who came as our Redeemer would lean, whose aid he would seek, but by whose power, should they be provoked, must he miserably perish. Whence is it that Jesus, if Messiah, often when the Jewish opposers and disbelievers revile and reproach him, is heard to declare, that if it be that they turn from him, another people, from the East and the West, the North and the South, shall come in and possess the inheritance of the children of Abraham? that Gentiles and idolaters, accursed and hated of Jehovah, against whom in olden time his own arm was lifted; shall now, in the age about to unfold, for which we have waited so long, receive the blessing and the honor, while Israel shall be shut out, Jacob shall be counted as the heathen? Why, as he now doth, claiming for himself the kingdom, goes he thus abroad as a wanderer without home, or power, or friends? Why for his chief advisers and companions does he choose fishermen or publicans, or women that are of society, outcasts? Why speaks he of sufferings that are inevitable, to overtake him—nay, for such things has he said—why speaks he of death, as if it were for him an inevitable lot, from which there can be no escape? Are these the marks of

Messiah? The Messiah lives forever! his kingdom is everlasting! so say the Prophets. What shall we think of him, what must we believe, who, confronting the Prophets and setting them at naught, saith that he is the Christ who was to come, yet shall be no king, and shall die by the hands of violence? Verily while such shall be his language it is not difficult to foresee that such will be the end at which he shall arrive; for already are there those among the Pharisees, and of the Priests at Jerusalem who seek his life, and will have it, if human cunning and force can prevail against one endowed with such powers as those of Jesus. They will not longer bear that, what they esteem as blasphemous perversions of the Prophets, shall be uttered in the hearing of the multitude, and the great office of the Messiah of the Jewish people, brought down to the level where he would place it.

“When, during the long period that I have followed the steps of Jesus, I have sought him and conversed with him of these things, and have urged him to delay no longer, but if he be the Christ, to declare himself openly, he has said, that I have misconceived the nature of that office; that he has come a teacher of divine truth, not a Prince and King; that his office is to redeem mankind from sin, not to reign over them on the throne of Israel, and that he has long and often declared himself, but that the people will not understand or receive him. I have replied, that when the Prophets have spoken of the Christ, it hath been of him as the King of Israel and Judah, and it was impossible that the people, who have dwelt upon those promises so long, should look for any other person than such an one. He has answered, that

when the prophets speak of a kingdom they have intended a kingdom not of force, but of truth and righteousness, of peace and love; and then he hath gone on and painted, as a picture before the eye, the felicity of coming ages when men should be wholly swayed by the love of God, and ceasing to desire any other conquest, should be satisfied with a victory over themselves and over sin. I have freely acknowledged the greatness and excellency of what he hath thus said, and the blessings inconceivable, that would be conferred upon Israel by the prevalence and dominion of such a faith, but have added, that as Jews we were bound to be governed by our Scriptures and the Law given by Moses, and that while they stood and we revered them, and held by their teaching, we could believe no otherwise, than as we had done. It was not one only, but the whole people who, for so many ages, and now more than ever because their oppressions were great and the set time had come, in the Christ looked for a King and Saviour; and should so many wise and righteous men have been left in so great an error? He answered, that it was the temper of the people, their desire of a certain thing, that had caused them so long to misjudge the Prophets, and to believe only a part of what they had said; but if they would hearken as well to Isaiah as to Daniel and Moses, they would learn and would believe that the Christ was to be a sufferer rather than one who was to enjoy prosperity, to be a servant rather than a monarch. And then he expounded that long Scripture, where the Prophet speaks of one enduring many things, and at last, as a lamb was led to the slaughter, suffering death itself for the sins of the people, that by his stripes they might be healed, and

said that it was all spoken of the Messiah, who can found his new kingdom of righteousness only by first passing through suffering and death. I answered, that what he had said was so contrary to the present belief and hopes of the nation, that they never would receive it; they would set the united voice of a whole people against his, which was but that of a single person, and abide by it. To receive the doctrine he had delivered was more impossible to the Jew than even to deny and blaspheme Moses and the Prophets. The Jew was now looking for his redemption and the glorious coming of the Deliverer, and he would sooner renounce his name than forego the hopes which give to that name its highest honor. He only answered with sighing, that the heart of the people was too much set upon such hopes ever to believe in him, and it would only be when his death had opened their eyes and softened their hearts, that the truth would break upon them.

“These and many other things did we discourse of, in all which, he showed himself to me, as to the people, gentle and compassionate, not looking that one should on the instant renounce his present persuasions, but rather willing to wait till truth should enter in its own way and time, overcoming one by one and without force the errors or prejudices of the mind. It is only toward the Pharisees, and even the baser sort among them, to whom he ever speaks in tones of angry reproof—men who approach him only to pervert his speech and stir up against him the passions of the multitude.

“And, Julian, do you now doubt where stands Onias? Yet am I filled with admiration even as I was at first with the virtues and character of Jesus. But sure am I,

at the same time, that he deceiveth himself, that he misconstrueth the Prophets, and while he vainly thinketh himself to be the Christ, is indeed perhaps in the counsels of God, Elias, or the prophet, who should go before—whether to announce Herod or some other, who can tell? As the Christ of God—the promised Messiah, I reject and deny him! and this notwithstanding his birth, the voice at his baptism, and his miracles. He agreeth not with the Prophets. He is not that Great One. While he claims to be so, he is as one blinded, and led by the blind. He deceiveth his own soul; and the foolish people, who have no power to discern their right hand from their left, throng him and with their worship and flattery help to increase the mischievous delusion. They give their faith to him, and he giveth his faith to them. They believe he will yet show himself their king, and he believeth that, in some mysterious manner, he shall yet be ruler and king over them. But did they clearly comprehend what the kingdom is which, as I judge, he meaneth when he speaks of one, many fewer would there be to put their hope in him. They, however, can understand no such thing; but stand waiting each moment for the time when he shall shine forth in the glory of his new authority.

“Of Herod’s affairs, I scarcely need write to thee, since thou hast forsaken him. Yet will I say, that never have they seemed so prosperous as now. Allied now to one whose inward power is hardly less than that of the Great Herod, and every way equal to that of Antipas, to one moreover who is of the same royal house, the alien and the heathen being banished, as is fit, from the land of the elect of God, what prospect of success and

glory opens not before him? John, who alone dared to lift up his voice against the king, reaps his reward in the dungeons of Machærus, while his foolish followers wander about as sheep who have lost their shepherd, some of them having resorted to Jesus, but the greater part still holding together as a society by themselves, not less hostile toward the rival of their master, Jesus, than toward the persecutor, as they judge him, of their master, Herod. But from them nothing is to be apprehended. They are few and weak. And concerning Jesus, though it is certain that now the greater part of the people are with him, and by his virtues and powers he hath bound them to himself through their reverence and love of his character, and the expectation of advantage from his miracles, and of every kind of good so soon as he shall enter upon his glory, yet is it equally certain that all the persons in authority, the leaders of the Pharisees, the principal Scribes, the Priests at Jerusalem, and the council, are with utmost bitterness opposed to him, and seek his destruction. Though the smaller body they are the more powerful, and will doubtless in the end prevail. Herod, moreover, by his letters and his messengers continually stirreth them up and infuses a new hostility; not that they need urging to a work into which they throw themselves of their own accord, and with all the force inspired by a temper of revenge for injury and disappointed hopes. Herod might well have pursued his first plan, and intermeddled not, for without his aid, no one thing, not already come to pass, can be more certain than that the enraged Pharisees will soon accomplish the destruction of Jesus. Already have they directed the suspicions of Pilate and the Roman authorities

against him, as one who plots revolt in the state—as one who in secret speaks of a kingdom here in Judea, which he has been commissioned to set up, which is to swallow up all other kingdoms, until it becomes universal. These things and many more of the same kind have been reported to Pilate and the powers in Rome, but without any immediate effect, such as was desired ; for the Procurator, upon diligent inquiry through those who have followed Jesus, has declared that he finds no ground of accusation in what they have reported, the language of Jesus having no regard, so far as they could learn, to any Power that is to be set up and established in Judea, but to some mysterious institutions, of which no clear idea could be formed, except that they seemed to have respect rather to what concerns the right conduct of life and the founding of a kingdom of righteousness, than to enterprises that would interfere with the Laws of the Empire. Nevertheless, though little may be now apprehended, the suspicions of Rome have been excited toward him, and it will be wonderful indeed, if they should not beget the consequences which suspicions once engendered rarely fail to do. Although, Julian, I have not as yet, myself engaged in any action against Jesus or his disciples, yet can I not lament, but must rejoice that ere long he will fall before the many enemies that are gathering around him, and so the way be left clear and unobstructed for the exalting of the rightful king. The Scribes and the Rulers, who on the first appearance of Jesus were so prompt to believe, thinking that He had come who should confirm them in their honors and raise them higher, in their vexation and rage that Jesus has courted them not, but publicly assailed them and exposed



their errors and as it were expelled them from the kingdom, whatever it may be which he came to found, will without aid from any quarter, accomplish his ruin."

Such was the language of Onias at this time.

Greatly did I desire once more to visit Judea, but the same reasons prevailed to keep me in Rome. Yet with such frequency did I receive intelligence of the whole life and doings of Jesus from Onias and Judith, that scarcely could I have known more had I myself been a follower of the Prophet. From these letters I would willingly transfer large portions, but must forbear. Especially would it please me to present here the many letters of Judith, in which it would be seen how deeply and how truly she penetrated, and comprehended the character of Jesus—with some remaining errors indeed—and the nature of the services which it was his purpose to perform for his nation and the world, of which so few, hardly even his nearest followers, comprehended the least, but which time has since revealed to all. But these also must be passed by.

It was about the time of the Feast of Dedication, that Judith wrote thus.

"When we thought that the wonders concerning Jesus had come to an end, new ones have unfolded to perplex and astonish us. We now sit still, waiting to behold what shall be the issue; for in vain, utterly in vain, were it for the hand of man—though that of Herod, or of a thousand Herods—to be raised, while the visible hand of God reveals itself over the whole length and breadth of Israel. In very deed doth God now dwell on earth! When John appeared we deemed that

a prophet had surely arisen. When Jesus was proclaimed by a voice from Heaven, we could not doubt that one greater than any who had gone before had come. But what shall we say now, when of those who have been the near followers of Jesus, his chosen disciples, a multitude as it were, possessing the same power as Jesus to heal diseases, to drive out devils, to raise the dead have proceeded forth from him and penetrated every region of the land, preaching the kingdom of God, that it is now nigh at hand, and to show that they preach with the authority of Jesus and God, working the most surprising miracles wherever they go? The people are in amazement. Save a few, all believe that now the kingdom will shortly appear, and Jesus reign in Israel. 'What else,' they say, 'can mean so astonishing a preparation? Were the heavens and their hosts to fall on the earth or to pass away, the event were not more wonderful than the things that have happened among us, and to what other end can they point than the founding of that kingdom to which, for these thousand years, the whole people of Israel have been constantly looking? We no longer doubt that our eyes, even ours, shall now behold the salvation of Israel, the redemption of Judah. We indeed cannot tell why he, who shall so soon sit upon the throne of David, who utters the wisdom of God, and doth the works of God, still appeareth as a servant. Neither can we tell why he prophesieth suffering and pain and even death as to overtake himself. This confounds us; but while things so wonderful of another kind, and which are evidently of God, are taking place, we are content to wait in respect to other matters, and trust that we shall in due

time be made to know clearly what now perplexes us.' Thus judge and speak the great multitude of the people. Many of the chief men also and Rulers believe in Jesus, and but for shame or fear would openly confess him. I hear of those who, both in Jerusalem and elsewhere, have gone to him secretly, with the purpose to inquire into his designs and unite themselves to his cause. Fain would the people compel him to declare himself and make no more tarrying, but assume the place they are sure is his, and raise Israel to her proper glory. And alas! why will he not do so? How incomprehensible is the delay! All men stand waiting, all are sure that he who can do the works of Jesus, and who hath now bestowed the same power upon so many, can be no other than the Son of God, the king of Israel; yet to-day is as yesterday, and he still refuseth to hearken to our entreaties—he still wanders through the land, scattering indeed the light of his truth and his virtues everywhere, but is otherwise as if he were the servant of servants, soiled with the way, overcome by fatigue, often insulted by those set on by the Priests, having not where to abide in peace. •

“But why have I delayed so long to tell you that he hath of late been in the Peræa, and on the banks of the Jordan, continuing a long time in the villages round about; that among other places he hath visited Beth-Harem; and that when there, exercising his power of healing upon the sick and the possessed, the lame and blind, he restored to sight and soundness the father of our Ruth! In vain had Ruth persuaded and urged that he should go up to Jerusalem; his desire of life was too little to tempt him so far, on so doubtful an errand.

But when it came to be certain that Jesus would soon arrive in Beth-Harem, then he declared that if that happened, he would seek his help. He did so. And no sooner did the benevolent Jesus behold him and his wretched state, Ruth sitting at his side, and by her countenance saying more than any words could utter, no sooner did he hear his declaration, 'Sir, I believe; I believe that thou art from God,' than he touched him, the word was spoken, and he was restored whole and fair, as when he was a merchant of Tyre. It were vain to describe the joy of Ruth when she beheld her father, as she had not beheld him since the days of her extreme youth. Aloud they gave thanks to God and Jesus, when they saw what was done, and declared their readiness to follow him wheresoever he should go. But he only desired them, to live unto God, and the times would show them what they should do.

"They returned with us to our dwelling, and this great restoration was celebrated in the evening by feasting, dancing, and music, and by the presence of all our friends from Beth-Harem—excepting Zadok alone, who, believing that the powers of Jesus, or professing so to believe, are of the Devil, held it impious in us to receive aid from such a source, as it would be also in him to rejoice with us in what had been done. But beside him all were with us—and for the last time, Saturninus, who, now soon by the requisition of the Procurator, departs with his soldiers for Jerusalem. He also, Julian, hath become a believer in Jesus, so far as one can believe in Jesus, who believes not first in Moses and the Prophets. Though he understands not much of our expectations of a Messiah, and considers not Jesus at all

in regard to that office, he yet acknowledges in him a divine power and authority, and doubts not that he has come from God to be a teacher and reformer of mankind. His wisdom he had highly esteemed as he had perused it in the sayings, the parables, and discourses, I had from many sources gathered together, and deemed it well worthy to proceed from a divine instructor, but it was not until he had himself often witnessed the works which he did, that he received him as a teacher come from God. As such he now readily acknowledges him. I wait impatiently for the time when he shall receive Moses and the Law also, and Jesus, as not only a teacher come from God, but the Christ of Israel.

“It was on this same evening there was present with us one, who having been long time a disciple and companion of Jesus, had turned from him at length, and ceased to have faith in him. He was from Bethabara, and even from the very first had been with him. Although it was to me a thing not to be explained, how one who had companied with Jesus so long should forsake him, yet I was glad, seeing there was such an one, to be able to converse with him, to discover why he had deserted the society and cause of one who had every day given farther and higher proofs of his being the Son of God: ‘Have you not,’ I asked, ‘found that in the company of Jesus, for which you sought?’

“‘By no means,’ he answered.

“‘But,’ said I, ‘you found wisdom and truth, gentleness and humanity in Jesus, and were these no bonds to hold you.’

“‘I cannot deny,’ he answered, ‘that I found all these’;

and whatever other virtues you may name, they were all there.'

"'Did you then,' said Onias, 'doubt the works of Jesus? Saw you any reason to think them not works of God?'

"'Surely not,' he replied, 'whoever shall consort with Jesus as I have done, will have the same persuasion that one so good and pure as he could have no communion with evil spirits, that he has, that the light of the Sun and the rains of Heaven and the flowers of the field come not from them—from none save God. Yet at the same time that he believes this, will he believe with equal strength, that he is not the Christ, as he declares himself to be, and as they who have joined him at first believed him to be.'

"'Yet,' said I, 'the greater part of those who first joined him still remain with him; and as for the people at large, whereas but few at first were persuaded that he was the Christ, now, since these new wonders have come abroad and the works of Jesus have been so many, all Israel, save the Priests and Scribes, believe that he is the Messiah who should come, and that so in due time will he declare himself to the shame of all gainsayers, doubters, and deniers.'

"He answered and said, 'that they who stand at a distance, and see and know only a part, cannot judge in such a case so well as those who are near and see more and with more exactness. Whose faith was firmer than mine, when forsaking family and the affairs of life, I became a follower of Jesus? I was fain to think that in Jesus I beheld the long expected deliverer; for in him I noted the signs of a prophet mighty in word and in

deed and like unto Moses; his words were with authority, his life was holy, and his works surely, were those of God. It needed not reasoning and argument to produce conviction in my mind, I believed at first, as I did at last with all the force of my mind that he was a man from God. But was it for that,—because he was a man from God that we had joined ourselves unto him? was it for the works he could do? not so; but as you well know because we deemed him the chosen of God, our Deliverer and King.’

“‘And why,’ asked I, ‘do you refuse to believe him such? Is there any other in whom Israel may place such hope?’

“‘If there is not,’ he replied, ‘then may Israel well renounce all hope; for there is none in him. Not only have we who forsook all and followed him derived no advantage from our fidelity, but no prospect opens of such advantage in the future. Though we, who stood nearest him, have pressed him to declare himself, and lift up the standard that should show him Christ, though on all sides men throng him and urge him to delay no longer, but assume his throne, he hearkens not to us—nor only that—he sternly rebukes all such desires of honor, saying, that all who follow him with such desires will fail of their end—that instead of honor and worldly gain, they must rather look to deny themselves, and renounce even the common enjoyments of life; that instead of exercising authority over others, they must rather look for persecution and oppression; that life will be more likely to be lost in his service than gained. Then, when his discourse is not of this sort, subverting all the notions this people entertain of the looked for

Messiah, it is often dark and perplexing, so that when we hear we understand it not. To all which, of late, hath been added a frequent prophecy of his own sufferings and death, and of danger and suffering to all who are joined with him, so that it became clear to us, that whoever else he might be, he is not the Christ of God, and that declaring himself to be so, he knew not his own office, and so having deceived himself, was ignorantly the cause of deceiving others also. For his holiness and his works willingly would I have remained with him ; but having followed him not for these, but for other things quite different, to which these indeed might be additions, but the want of which they could not supply, it only remained to renounce a cause which no longer stood approved to our judgments. Many with me went back and walked no more with him.'

" 'You receive not then,' I asked, 'the charges of the malicious among the Jews, that he is mad and hath a Devil ?'

" 'Surely not,' he answered ; 'his words are not those of one that hath a Devil, albeit they were sometimes such as we understood not ; and for his miracles, though doubtless, such works may be done by wicked spirits, we were sure of nothing more, than that they were of God. Would he only have granted what we asked, a sign, namely, that he was the Messiah whom we sought, never should we have forsaken him ; but while he still called himself the Christ, he would give no such sign as we required ; so, how therefore could we believe ? He would have us to believe that the Christ was one who should teach excellent things, rebuke sin, reform the lives of men, and build up a universal kingdom of truth



and holiness ; but often as he thus discoursed, and prophesied of the future, and that in completing his designs both he himself and we his followers should meet with opposition, suffering, and death perhaps, we could not receive doctrines so contrary to the prophets, and to what from our youth, we had been taught and had believed. We could only withdraw from one who seemed misled by dreams—deceived or deceiving. We were ready to take upon ourselves all the dangers that would have come from the Romans, would he but have yielded to our importunities. There seems now, nothing left to those who hope for Israel, but that they should join themselves to Herod.’

“ ‘And have the greater part of those,’ I asked, ‘who with thyself attended upon his steps, also abandoned him?’

“ ‘No,’ he replied, ‘they are still with him, hoping and believing still. Which to me is astonishing. For what hope can there be longer, when so often as hath already happened, his disciples, and the multitude together with them, have been ready as it were by force to make him king, and he hath still refused? What can be done more for his exaltation than has been done? The loss and the ruin be upon his own head!’

“ ‘There they will be,’ said Onias ; ‘the patience of those, who, having regard to the virtues and innocence of Jesus, have forborne to do aught in opposition, while he hath this long time claimed to be the Christ, yet hath not shown himself as such, is well nigh spent, and when it shall be wholly, the fierceness of the rebuke of those whom he hath deceived, will be in proportion to the hopes that have been fed, only to be mocked. Other

enterprises that, as I believe, would have joined all Israel together in one phalanx have been postponed, have been arrested mid-way, that we might learn what should be the issue of this coming of the Nazarene; and now behold the issue!

“I saw that the passions of Onias, with difficulty restrained of late, as they have been worked upon more and more by Zadok, were kindling, and said, ‘Perhaps this is not the issue; Jesus himself, as we hear, still points to the future, and of late there have been grander demonstrations than ever before of the power with which he hath been entrusted.’

“Onias only answered, ‘We have been kept waiting long enough; we have seen miracles enough. Let him now look to himself.’

“Onias, with the stranger, then arose, and together disappeared among the deep shadows of the house.

“The festivities were prolonged to a late hour. You would have rejoiced to behold the happiness of Ruth hanging about her father, with all her joy breaking through her countenance, or else testifying the usual exhilaration of her spirits in the swift mazes of the dance. This sudden increase of happiness and good fortune, seems to have no ill effect upon her character, but, on the contrary, draws forth and gives prominence to some parts of it which before were too little seen.

“One thing only was mentioned, in our long conversation with the disciple of Jesus, that seemed contrary to the common opinion which all entertain of his goodness. It concerns the imprisonment of John the Baptist, who since the month preceding the Feast of Tabernacles, has now lain in the dungeons of Machærus. We learned

from this disciple, that though Jesus had often been importuned by the disciples of John, and by his own, to interpose and deliver him, for it was feared that Herod, set on by Herodias, would destroy him, he would not comply with any such request; and that though John himself had sent messengers to him asking, if he were really the promised Messiah, thereby conveying the knowledge that himself was in prison, and expressing his astonishment, that if Jesus were that great person, he would do nothing for his release, yet neither would he take any notice of such messages, but was willing to leave the Baptist still in prison and at the mercy of the king. This conduct of Jesus, we were told, had filled all his followers with surprise; inasmuch as they, knowing the powers of Jesus, were persuaded that if he had chosen to exert them, it would have been but the work of a moment to effect his deliverance. They could not understand why one so virtuous as John, and who had in the beginning given his testimony so fully in behalf of Jesus, should not in return experience benefits at the hands of Jesus which it would be so easy to confer. Why Jesus hath been willing to act such a part I cannot explain any more than they, yet doubtless this may be said, that although he has not as yet interposed, he has not refused to do so, and may at some future time; but although he should never do so, I could still believe, that one of so much goodness as Jesus, of whose goodness all Israel has had knowledge and experience, would have reasons, we should judge, sufficient, to give for withholding his aid, could we only arrive at a knowledge of them.

“It was also evident, from what this disciple said, that

the doubts which had been expressed by John concerning Jesus, whether he were indeed the Messiah, had greatly affected the body of his followers, who were led by it themselves into new and more serious doubts. If John, whom all had been accustomed to regard as a prophet, now questioned the claims of Jesus, and was disposed to deny them, and to hint that we must wait yet longer, for some other to arise, much less, it was said, can we believe without some misgivings. Yet, to set against these doubts of John, there were miracles more astonishing than ever—not only on the part of Jesus himself, but on the part of his chosen disciples also. Such demonstrations of power, and of his close connection with God, through whom he had conferred such gifts upon his disciples, made it clear that there was no greatness or office which he had not as yet assumed, to which he might not with reason aspire, and reach. It seemed to rest with himself whether he continued as he was, or seized the throne of Judea, or in addition to that, the sovereignty of Rome, and the empire of the world itself! What could he not attempt and accomplish, to whose command seem to be obedient all the forces of nature? Never, Julian, can I doubt whether this man, so endowed, is he for whom we look. Of our Christ he has all the marks, save only those of outward greatness and authority; and how easily at any moment may he arise and clothe himself with these? And, in the mean time, while we wait for this, we behold his perfect character and life, we profit by his divine wisdom, we hear the wonderful things he teaches of the future life and glory of man, of God and the true worship which he requires. All Israel rejoices in his presence and in

the benefits of his works. And for me, though he added nothing to what he has already done, though after having instructed us by his truth and his example, after having rebuked the Pharisees, purged the Temple service, restored the Law, and abolished the Traditions, he should do nothing more, but end his life with the name and praise only of a Prophet in Israel, and a benefactor of those with whom he lived, dying then as others die, or else, mayhap, being translated, as were Enoch and Elijah, not knowing the pains of death, I should be well content, and bless God that he had come, and that Israel had been permitted to rejoice in his light. But I doubt not, for one moment, that we shall see more than this ; that our eyes, even ours, shall behold the salvation of our God ; that this Jesus shall not only save us from our sins, but redeem us also out of the hand of our enemies.

Thus did it appear plain, that Judith's faith in Jesus faltered not, but that in the face of so many things unfavorable and discouraging to one, who, like her, could look before and behind, she still believed that Jesus would fulfil all the hopes he had raised. It was not surprising, that the multitudes, who for the most part looked no further than the miracles, which were now performed in greater numbers and splendor than ever, cleaved to him ; and, looking rather at what they desired than at what it was reasonable for them to expect, trusted still against all adverse signs, that it was he who should redeem Israel. For them it was enough that Jesus continued to give proofs so astonishing, that God was with him ; while such power and favor were his, all seemed

to be within his reach, and they doubted not in one way or another, sooner or later they would succeed in their endeavors to place him where they desired him. They could not oppose to his miracles, the true nature and tendencies of his doctrine, and the spirit of his character and life, which made it so plain to me, that whatever else he might be, he never would show himself to be the Christ for whom we look. No two things, differing from each other never so much, seemed to me so contrary the one to the other, as Jesus and the Christ. To Judith, however, these things did not present themselves so strongly, but as her letter shows, she persuaded herself, that in some manner, not by any one to be foreseen or described, he would continue to manifest himself the teacher and prophet whom she could love, and by whose labors and instructions the hearts of the people were to be changed, and in due time, when the preparation was complete, stand forth before Israel and the world, as the Messiah also.

I now determined within myself, that so soon as the severity of the winter should be past I would again return to Judea, and at Beth-Harem await what should be the issue of the wonderful events still taking place. It seemed from many things in the letters which I continued to receive, that by the people it was believed that somewhat that should be decisive in regard to Jesus, would happen at the time of the Passover. It was indeed rumored, that Jesus had himself made such a declaration to his disciples, and that they also were looking forward to that Feast, as to the hour that would crown their hopes with their long delayed fulfilment. Many things

therefore conspired to determine me to turn towards the East at that time. But while I waited for the season to arrive, when it would be proper to take my departure, I heard from Onias concerning John, what I was by no means surprised to hear, regarding it as hardly any other issue than what was natural and to be looked for. He thus wrote.

“Although we look to see you at the Passover, yet do I not intermit the intelligence it is our wont to impart; especially do I not delay to inform you of what has taken place at Machærus concerning John, and which hath ended in his destruction by Herod.

“I well know that at one time you, as well as myself, opposed the purposes of the Tetrarch when they aimed at the life, and even the injury of John; in our judgment he was then in many ways doing more for than against his cause. I know not in what opinion your mind now rests, though I can well suppose, that having separated yourself from the affairs of Herod—again I trust to be joined to them,—you stand ready to condemn whatever measures he may have adopted to secure the ends at which he still aims. For myself, I am free to declare, that I think no longer as then, but that I now deem it right that so powerful an enemy as John of what we believe to be the cause of Judea, should be cut off. If that at which Herod aims be, as I truly think it to be, the cause of God and Judea, then must those steps be justified in the sight of God and the law, which are needful in order to arrive at the end, else we were like those, who, desiring to run a race, have first bound or cut off their feet. No advance could be made in the favor of the people while John was abroad, and though doubtless

his continual confinement in Machærus might in some sort have served the same purpose, yet while he lived they who hoped in him once would still hope, and chance might have sent him once more his freedom, or Herod himself might have relented and bestowed it upon him. Wherefore it is better that he is dead, the rather as it was brought about more by others than by Herod himself, so that if the people shall be disposed to a harsh judgment, it must light upon other shoulders than his."

"For it fell out in this wise. In the same Egyptian Hall where, when we were at Machærus, Herod feasted his adherents, did he, so soon as Herodias reached that place, give a banquet in celebration of his birth-day, to all whom he could bring there from every part of the land. His chief officers of government, the great captains of his armies, and all, who, by their presence, would show that they were on his side, failed not to be there. I also was present. The splendors of the scene, when thou wast there, seem, as I think of them, but as shadows and darkness compared with those which now blazed all over Machærus. But the difference within the palace were well explained by only saying, that now there were present, arrayed in all the magnificence of the East, Herodias and her daughter, whose beauty, of both the mother and the child, changed into dimness all the shining of lamp and jewelry, and far more than they, dazzled the senses of whosoever beheld them. There was now, when at the banquet, no silence and gloom, as before, but the joyful confusion of a thousand voices, of those who seemed contending with each other, which should express most loyalty toward the royal pair by



shout and song and the frequent pledging of the wine cup.

“Thus it continued until toward the middle of the feast, and every known pleasure had been enjoyed to the full, and little more could be looked for but such as should be a repetition of what had gone before, when behold! as if to render the present banquet distinguished before all others, there suddenly entered the hall, preceded by a train of damsels, the daughter of Herodias, who, first approaching the throne of the astonished King, and craving his permission, then ascended what had been previously prepared for the display, and there performed with a grace and power never seen in the dancing girls of this or any other region, the most difficult dances of Egypt, of Greece, and the farther East,—what they are thou well knowest,—filling all who beheld her with wonder and most with delight, and who, as she paused now and then and the music ceased, rent the air with their shouts of applause. When this had been prolonged until, as it seemed to me, the dances of all nations had been performed, her maidens often joining her, or relieving her, and Herod seemed beside himself with joy, being moreover well in his cups, as were also the others who were seated with him, he called out to her to draw nigh to him, and not knowing how else to declare his pleasure, cried out that no reward could be so great as she deserved, but promised her whatsoever she should ask of him, though it were a half of his kingdom, confirming what he said by oaths. The young girl upon that, with a modesty that won applause from all, even as her dancing had done, said, that having done nothing to deserve the least reward, she could not ask what should

diminish the possessions of the King, either by the half of its value or the smallest portion thereof; she therefore requested only what was of no value to Herod, the life, namely, of a violent and wicked man, already forfeit to the State, the fierce and constant enemy of her mother, and not less, as all Israel knew, of Herod himself, and who was now a prisoner in Machærus,—the life of John the Baptist. No sooner was this heard than loud cries of approbation arose from the tables, mingled with laughter and expressions of extreme astonishment also at the nature of the demand, when from the promise and the oath of the King, there was plainly no limit to what she might not with reason have exacted, and the King have been bound to bestow. Herod, though plainly troubled, that she had asked nothing which it would have agreed better with his magnificence to give, and expressing some sorrow that the loss of John had been required, was not yet at liberty to take back what he had promised, so he at once gave the sign to his attendants, who quickly went and returned bringing with them the head of the prophet, as some will continue to call him, which being delivered to Salome, and her train of maidens, they departed, bearing it with many noisy signs of satisfaction, to Herodias, who by her examination of it, was satisfied that it was indeed the head of her enemy.”

“Thus perished John, who in my present judgment should have perished long before. And thus may all others perish, who thrust themselves in between Israel and the accomplishment of her great designs! Doubtless, Julian, Jesus will fall in like manner. Already many times has his life been sought, and that too by Herod, so that many places have become dangerous to

him, and he hath taken refuge now in the dominions of Philip, and now in the desert places beyond Jordan. But as he changeth not his manner of speech, but still cries out against the chief men of the nation, still claims to be the Christ, while he prophesieth against Israel and for the Gentile, the same passions rage against him, and will rage until they gain their end. It is not his power to work miracles, nor the mad worship of the rabble that will save him; unless indeed, performing such wonders in behalf of others, he, when the occasion comes, shall perform somewhat as surprising for himself, and transport himself beyond the reach of his pursuers. But thus much at least may be said for this strange person, that, while he is lavish of his bounties upon others, even the most wretched outcasts, he provides nothing for himself, nor derives the least advantage from a power that would seem capable to furnish him not only with all the necessities but the luxuries of life. Neither doth he seem to be guilty of any vice; for in this diligent inquiry hath been made, and many spies employed, that if such things were true, evidence might be had thereof, and witnesses found to accuse him. No earthly power, as I judge, can help him, unless he depart from his present customs, or put forth his arm of God, and save himself.

“Fail us not, Julian, at the Passover, when we shall surely look to see thee and converse of many things concerning which, with all our diligence, it is not possible to write. I shall still hope to see thee again joined to the cause of the only one who hath power to save us.”

This was the letter of Ónias concerning John. I was not surprised at his fate; I rather wondered that Herod had refrained from his life so long, when there existed so many causes of anger, so many reasons why he must desire his destruction. And I did not believe what Onias seemed to set forth, as if believed by him, that it was with any regret that the King consented to the death of John, and gave the orders for his execution. Had he not rather rejoiced in an opportunity for his destruction, which presented others before the world as the immediate authors of his death, and so shielded himself, he might easily have recalled an engagement made in haste, in his cups moreover, from which the world would readily, as he must have known, have held him excused, especially as the breaking of his word in one direction would have been accompanied by an act of magnificence towards Salome, that would have been more than keeping it in another. In words he would have broken it; while in its spirit he would have more than kept it. This was so plain to me, that no conviction could be stronger than that Herod rejoiced in the happy chance that rid him, so easily to himself, of an old and dangerous foe.

Being now determined to revisit Judea, and to be present at the Passover in Jerusalem, I waited with impatience for the passing away of the winter months; and the more, as the means of transmitting letters by reason of the violence of the season were greatly diminished. I rarely heard of what took place in Judea after the letter of Onias just given, which came not long after the Feast of Dedication. And if it was so with me,

how was it to those of my countrymen in Rome, who were not bound by the living ties which connected me with the holy land,—and how was it with the proper Roman population of this vast capital? What knew they, what could they know of what was doing in Galilee, on the Jordan, at Machærus, in Beth-Harem? Not a sound reached their ear; and though Jesus was there doing the greatest works of his life, the rumor of them was scarcely heard by these multitudes so remote, but what is much worse, so engaged by the affairs of a vast Empire and a tumultuous capital.

Spring at length approached, the Tiber opened his gates of ice, the imprisoned and impatient coursers of the sea broke loose from their bondage and set on their way toward all the ports of the known earth, bearing with them the luxuries of Roman art or her gold, to bring back in return the vegetable products or the rude manufacture of the half-civilized nations of Asia and Africa. It was on board a trader, bound to Casarea, that I embarked, and, after a quick and fortunate voyage, found myself once more entering the arms of her colossal port. No sooner had I left the ship with my effects, than I departed for Beth-Harem; and, that I might renew former pleasures, travelled the same winding road as before; again stopped to be refreshed at the cottage among the hills near Samaria, and again slept at the Inn of the complaisant Jael.

Of all that it now remains for me to say concerning the days passed in Judea, the record will be found in fragments of letters written, after my arrival at Beth-Harem, to Naomi in Rome.

## XX.

I CANNOT easily tell you, my mother, with what pleasure I found myself again beneath the roofs of Beth-Harem ; again seated where I was wont to sit and write to thee—overlooking the vineyards of Onias, the Jordan, and the distant hills ; or else walking on the banks of the river, with Judith, my old companion ; or sitting on the house-top at the evening hour, between her and Onias, conversing of the times and the prospects, opening or closing before us. I find that my true home is now, and must henceforth be in Judea. I can never again dwell in Rome. And I doubt not, my mother, that when the aspect of affairs here shall become more settled, and it shall be determined concerning Jesus and Herod, whether either of them or neither shall reign in Israel, you will stand ready, as indeed your promises have assured me you will, to leave Rome behind, and pass the decline of life here in the land of our Fathers—and we will hope under the reign of some native prince, if not beneath the rule of Messiah himself.

But of this I will speak hereafter ; I am now to tell you of whatever takes place here in Beth-Harem concerning our household, or in Judea concerning Jesus.

I find Judith occupied only by one thought, that of Jesus, and the probable events of the Passover. Though she will not admit that she doubts whether

Jesus will confirm her hopes by assuming his proper rank at the feast, yet is it evident, that her fears, or apprehensions, outweigh and outrun her hopes, for her countenance is ever anxious; and when her thought, or her conversation dwells more especially on these themes, its expression is melancholy and sad. I asked her of the progress he had made since the last letters I had received, and whether more or fewer miracles than before had been performed.

"Julian," she answered, "had God himself walked among us in bodily shape, and powers of healing had flowed out from the glance of his eye, or the air in which he moved, or the touch of his garments, the effects that had followed would not have been more astonishing than the new wonders that have been wrought by Jesus, either in respect to their number, or their greatness. Wherever he hath moved have miracles been witnessed, such as have filled all with amazement, and from all have drawn the same exclamation, 'who shall this be but the Christ?'"

"And you also have followed him," I said.

"Not constantly," she replied, "as have some; as now do Mary of Magdala and Joanna, the wife of Chuza"—

"She is then a disciple at last," I exclaimed.

"No one more devoted and sincere," replied Judith. "It was long before the late feast, that withdrawing from the service of Herod, with whom—then at length, the open enemy and persecutor of Jesus, plotting even against his life—she would no longer remain, she obeyed the desires of her heart, and joined the number of those who followed Jesus, hearing him whenever

she could, and whenever he tarried long in any one city, resorting thither, her husband with her, but not as yet, like her, a believer. For myself," continued Judith, "I went not far from Beth-Hærem; but when Jesus drew nigh, in the lower parts of Galilee, and especially while he sojourned here on the Jordan, and in the nearer regions of the Peræa, thou wilt not doubt that I was then with him, Ruth being ever my companion."

"And after seeing and hearing for thyself, Judith, how stands thy faith?"

"In the very strength of God!" she replied.

"And with no accompanying doubt?"

"With none," she answered. "Whether," she added, after a pause, "it be reasonable so to believe and trust, I know not; but so it is, after what I have beheld of the powers of Jesus, and have heard of his doctrine, I believe in him perforce, even as I believe in God. The works of God, the Heavens with their hosts declare him their maker and supporter; and so also the works of Jesus declare him to be of God, clothed with so much of a divine power as is needful to do such things. And when such an one proclaims himself, whether plainly or obscurely to be the Christ, shall not his declaration be received? I know not how to refuse it. Would it not be to say that God can speak falsely?"

"It would, indeed," I answered. "Yet many of his most constant followers take offence at his speech, and forsake him, or are in doubt."

"I see not what they would have;" Judith replied. "He indeed now speaks of his death as about to happen—many think at the approaching feast, but then he declares at the same time, that death shall not injure



him, for he can resist its power. And who can doubt that when he has raised others from the dead, and lately Lazarus of Bethany who had been long buried, he can protect himself from the effects of whatever might be inflicted upon him, or by virtues previously infused into his body, return to life after life had been taken away. Why he should permit himself to be slain, I indeed cannot tell; unless it be by restoring life again to himself, still further to increase the confidence of others in his power, and that he may then, having so returned restore at length the kingdom to Israel."

"Ah, Judith, I perceive that thy faith stands indeed in a divine strength; at least in a strength that is furnished not from any of the resources of human reason. I must confess, that for myself, though to the present moment I had believed with thee, the death of Jesus would convince me at length of my delusion. And I may safely promise, therefore, that, if being destroyed by the Priests or the Romans, he should overcome the power of death, and as thou thinkest, return to life, and then enter into his kingdom, I will myself believe in him, take him as the Christ, and wear the yoke of his allegiance."

"I shall not doubt then," said Judith, "to see thee both a disciple and a subject."

It was with no little eagerness that, soon after my arrival, I sought the home of Ruth and her father—he now in possession again of his limbs and his sight. By the aid of Onias and of ancient friends in Beth-Harem he has become a husbandman on the banks of the Jordan. There I found him, and now the mistress of a

well stored and comfortable dwelling, Ruth also, the happiest and the brightest spirit of these regions. They were truly glad to behold again one, who by a kind fortune, both as regards them, and himself, had first helped to lift them up out of their low estate. But every feeling toward me was lost in one of gratitude and love for Jesus, to whom they owe so much more. It is their delight to speak of him, and they would gladly have followed him had he encouraged them to do so. They now look forward with great expectations to the time, which they doubt not will come, when he shall stand revealed before the people. Their joy would be double, could they behold him seated where they think it his right to sit, and raised above any apprehension from those who are thirsting for his life. The approaching passover is expected by them with impatience, as they intend to go up to Jerusalem and trust then to see Jesus again, and are fully persuaded that at that time he will declare himself and appear what he really is. The rumors of his death, both as predicted by himself, or threatened by the Pharisees and Rulers, they will not credit. As for the purpose on the part of the Rulers to destroy him by accusing him before Pilate, they say that it is but the same report that has been renewed from time to time, during the whole year that Jesus has taught; and as for any prediction of such an event by himself, they judge it too little probable to deserve any credit. It is to them unlikely in proportion to their persuasion that Jesus is Christ, and in that they are immovably fixed. More grateful, hoping, and believing followers Jesus has not in all the compass of Judea than Levi and Ruth.

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The Ruler Shammai has been with us to-day. Upon inquiring for Zadok, he replied that he was already gone up to Jerusalem.

“Why so early?” Judith inquired.

“Can you ask, daughter?” said Shammai.

“I need not have asked, certainly,” replied Judith sighing; “the same cruel zeal, that has carried him so many times over Judea and Galilee, doubtless has now carried him to Jerusalem. May Jehovah confound all his counsels, and bring them to nought!”

“He will not rest,” said the Ruler, “until he has accomplished his aim. He can scarcely fail, what with his own craft, and the power of those with whom he is in league.”

“And his aim,” I said, “is the accusation and destruction of Jesus, I suppose.”

“Yes,” said Shammai, “nothing less. John being disposed of, the adherents of Herod look upon Jesus as the only remaining obstacle in their way.”

“But,” said I, “are not the people clearly with Jesus? When, as before the Feast of Tabernacles I mingled much with them, I found them for the most part of his side; and as I learn the numbers of his followers and friends have greatly increased of late, many even among the rich, and in high station, looking upon him with favor, and secretly favoring him, if not openly confessing him.”

“That is true,” said the Ruler; “the people worship him, and show their homage by crowding about him, hearing him preach, and looking on upon his miracles. But they are a loose, tumultuous, and changing body,

without leaders and without power, notwithstanding their numbers. It will be easy for Zadok and a few like himself to manage them; nay, by a little skill to make it appear that the people themselves require his destruction. There is a body of men in Jerusalem, Priests, Rulers, Pharisees, and Scribes, to whom, when united for some common object, the destruction of a friendless, solitary individual, like Jesus, will be but as the crushing of an insect."

"Say not so, Shammai," said Judith. "I will not believe that there are in all Jerusalem, bold and wicked as those white-washed Priests are, men to be found who will dare to assail with ill intent a man like Jesus, so evidently even in their own eyes full of the very power of God. They will fear lest their hands fall blasted at the very touch of him, and the curse of the Almighty cleave to and pursue them."

"Judith, Judith," cried Onias, "thou knowest not what thou sayest. If the Law is what we have taken it to be, even the Law of God, then doth Jesus well deserve to die! for what precept is there he hath not perverted, or what holy day he hath not violated? When, seeing what his powers are, we looked to behold him its friend and protector, what doth he but bring it into contempt more and more, breaking its commands himself and teaching others so? Be not so carried away, my daughter, by insane hopes as to despise the word of God—which so many years has been the boast and glory of his people, and raised them to a place above all the nations of the earth, whom God has been pleased to leave in their idolatry—and in its room thrust the new doctrines of this young man of yesterday; for which,

if he offer the proof of his miracles, they must be the product of Devils, seeing that God cannot overthrow his own work."

Said Shammai, "Not only will he be charged with breaking the Law, and with blasphemy for making himself the Son of God, but with treasonable designs against the Roman Power, in that he would set up a new kingdom here in Judea."

"That which they who accuse him charge him with, themselves would do," cried Judith.

"So it must be said," replied Shammai.

"Beware, my child, what thou sayest," said Onias. "As sure as it shall be that Jesus is at the feast, so sure will it be that he will fall before the united power of Herod and the Pharisees; and who can say that with him his followers may not also fall? If Pilate shall be made to believe that Jesus has aimed at dominion, it will be easy to turn his jealous mind against others also. And who more than Zadok hath knowledge of the faith of every soul in Israel?"

"I fear not Zadok, my father," replied Judith, "nor the attempts of any leagued with him either in Jerusalem or elsewhere. What I am sure of is this, that the people are with Jesus from end to end of Israel, not doubting, that now at the Passover, or soon, their hopes will be fulfilled. A few in Jerusalem of Priests and Herodians may raise tumults, and by sudden violence, by injustice and deceit, attempt the life of Jesus and of his disciples, but never can they succeed. The people would not abandon in his extremity one whom they have seen and listened to so long as a Prophet of God."

"My child," said Shammai; "I fear thou deceivest

thymself. I too could wish that Jesus might escape the snares that are on every side set for him by the Sadducees, as well as by Pharisees and Herodians; but as I judge, he cannot, or will not. Were he now to listen to the advice of many, even as I learn of some of his disciples themselves, who warn him against going up to Jerusalem—as they say only to die, and they with him—he might doubtless retreat into Peræa, or upper Galilee or Arabia, where Aretas who already hath had communication with him would give him protection, or into Parthia where Artabanus would serve him doubtless the same good turn. But, Judith, if he presses on to Jerusalem, think not that the people can save him, if it be that the Rulers should assail him; for just as they shall perceive the schemes of his enemies succeeding against him, and that he falls more and more into their hands, will their faith in him grow faint and die away. His weakness at such a moment will prove him not to be he for whom they had taken him. ‘How,’ they will say, ‘could the wicked triumph against the Lord’s anointed! If he is the Christ he will save himself! our help cannot be needed; and if he save not himself, nor fall upon his enemies to their utter destruction, then may we know he is not the Christ, and that we have been deceived.’ They will therefore stand still, and await the issue.”

“The words of Shammai, Judith,” said Onias, “cannot be gainsaid. That such will be the conduct of the people, there can be no doubt in any one who will mix with them and hear their language. They will not, nor in truth, could they rise in defence of one who hath ever taught the love of peace, to bear wrong rather than resist it—in no case to return evil for evil; and all Israel

knows such to be the maxims this strange man hath preached. They will hope to see him blaze forth in the resistless power of one whom they believe God to be with, and so vindicate his claims to the throne of Israel. But that will be his work, not theirs."

"Do you also think the same, Julian?" said Judith turning to me.

"I can think no otherwise," I answered.

Judith sat for a moment buried in thought, when she lifted her head and said, "I believe you are right; it must be so. If Jesus fall before his enemies he is not our Deliverer; if he triumph over them by the same power we have seen him use against disease and death itself, then in that shall we be furnished with the sign of his greatness, not to be mistaken, for which we have asked and waited so long. But no more do I doubt that such signs shall be given, than that his birth was announced by angels, that the voice of God was heard at his baptism, that Lazarus and the Widow's Son returned from death at his word, that the heavens are above me and the earth beneath me. God has been with him thus far—or else all is false, every thing a dream—and he will not forsake him now, or ever. He has defended him against the Nazarenes, and against Herod, and against the furious rabble who many a time have set upon him to stone him; and when his need shall be greatest, and those who hate him shall be gathered together in one place, it will not be then for the first time, that his own power, or the power of God shall fail him. In some way, it may be in a way we now think not of, God will appear and show him to be his Son—Redeemer and King. For myself, I shall go up to Jerusalem to this feast,

as one who goeth to a marriage with songs and dancing."

Said Shammai, "It may be so, who can tell? Time will show."

"All is so strange concerning him," I said, "that it cannot be denied to be possible. That God hath been his strength hitherto, I find it difficult not to believe; he hath surely enabled him to do wonderful things, and hath saved him out of threatening dangers. Who shall say there is no good ground of hope, that if darker dangers should encompass him in Jerusalem, a power of God shall be put forth for his deliverance greater than ever—nay, there is force in what Judith says, that it were strange indeed should it not be so. But, whatever power may be put forth, and whatever deliverance be wrought out, who can believe that such an one as Jesus shall be shown to be Messiah? It is not surely the possession of power alone that shall make Jesus, or any other, to be the Christ, but a certain kind and fitness of character, which Jesus hath not, and which seems not possible to belong to him."

"The young man says what is doubtless true and just," said Onias, "and so the event will show. Why do so many in Israel reject and deny Jesus as the Christ, but because they see not in him the lineaments of the Christ? Why are Chorazin and Bethsaida, and now Capernaum, unbelieving, yea and Nazareth also, but because in Jesus, notwithstanding the wonders of his hand, howsoever wrought, they see not the son of David! Many—and who shall wholly deny them reason?—give his works to the Prince of Devils! To them do I now incline; for, if they were of God, he who works them



could not, as Jesus doth, deceive the people or violate the law. But they of the Jews are to be counted by multitudes, who, though they see God in the miracles of Jesus, do not behold the Christ in him; nor will they look upon it as a possible thing that he should ever be found in him.—Israel will not be at peace until Jesus shall be as John! And what would happen most happily for the people would be, that, at the feast, Jesus should by the Council be accused, and suffer at the hands of Pilate the just punishment of his deeds.”

Judith said no more, but Ruth coming in at that moment, she arose and with her withdrew, grieved for the words of her father, into the garden.

“Were all in Judea,” said Onias, “like Judith, the triumph of Jesus were a sure and an easy one. Her whole speech by day, and her dreams by night are of him; and it is what she has heard of his teaching, even more than what she has seen of his works, that has so won her heart. Not a disciple that follows his steps has a faith like hers. And the faith of few has been so assailed as hers hath been, what with Zadok and Onias. Would it were placed on somewhat more worthy. He who has thus thrown Israel into confusion, trampled on the law, insulted the priesthood, and will die as the fool dieth, little deserves it. Verily, but for him, the true Messiah were long ere this sitting on the throne of Israel.”

There no longer seems any doubt that the destruction of Jesus is resolved upon by the council, and that most of the chief men and rulers look on with approval, or openly aid them in the measures they pursue. The

works of Jesus of late, which have been so wonderful and astonishing, have filled them with new rage, and wholly blinded them to the truth, that, though Jesus is not, or will not be the Christ, he may still be a prophet and messenger of God. As he disappoints them in one thing, they have hardened themselves against all his claims, ascribe his power to Satan, and are bent only on his ruin. He who has exposed them before the people, and laid bare their hollowness and hypocrisies, though he may do the works of Angels, they will not forgive, but will have their revenge. And the great thing which he hath so lately done at Bethany, the fame of which has filled the land and brought many to believe in him, has seemed but to inflame their rage to a higher pitch of madness. That they, rather than Jesus, may possibly be blasphemers and rebels against the authority of God, never enters their mind. But their persecutions of Jesus and his followers will surely serve but to endear them the more to the people on whom they have conferred so many benefits. Were it not for the industry with which the Scribes and Rulers sow the seeds of doubt and distrust in the minds of the multitude, all would, methinks, believe in Jesus, through veneration of his virtues—through simple love of him as a gentle and beneficent friend. Each one with whom you may converse has something to tell of what he has done to himself or some kinsman or neighbor—of some instruction he has imparted, or some miracle of mercy he has wrought. They say that both for his goodness and his powers they doubt not that he partakes of the Spirit of God, even as the prophets of old—and these things also so far make for him that he is the Christ;—they would rather, therefore,

that he were left alone untouched, unimpeded by the rulers, to finish his ministry, whatever it may be, and perhaps other signs, in process of days or weeks, and such as we look for, will be given. A general persuasion has gone abroad, that at the present Passover such signs will at length be given, and all their hopes fulfilled, in consequence of which multitudes far greater than usual are going up to the feast. But while the populace are thus justly disposed, they are at the same time weak, timid, and distrustful—they will do no more than stand by at rest, ready to receive Jesus if he shall commit himself to them, but not ready, nor able, as their temper now is, to do aught to deliver him from the hands of the Priests, if they should finally determine to assail him. According to the saying of Shammai, they will leave him to his own strength, trusting to behold in the manner in which he shall use it, tokens of his authority, and signs of his great office.

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The day had now arrived, when we were to set forth on our way to Jerusalem. We were bound to the dwelling of Heber, a kinsman of the mother of Judith standing without the city just where the mount of Olives falls into the plain, and opposite the fount of Siloam. But seeing that at this feast the houses of those who inhabit the city, or its near neighborhood, are hardly able to hold the numbers of such as pour in from all parts of the land, we took with us by the providence of Onias, loaded upon a camel, the materials of a tent, which, if the necessity arose, would serve as a protection against the heat of the day season, and by night furnish a cooler re-

treat and more agreeable than the closer apartments of a dwelling.

The heavens smiled upon us with a gentle air and a temperate heat, as we took our departure from the house of Onias. Two days must be devoted to the journey, as Judith and Ruth seated upon slow-paced mules made a part of our company, and our motion would therefore be slow; and for their more especial companion, and seated on the same wretched kind of beast, Shammai;—Ziba, with others of the servants of Onias, conducting the camels heavy-loaded with our tent and other effects. Onias, Levi, and myself, mounted upon fleeter animals, were able to make more rapid progress, so that often, while the Ruler and his two maidens crept lazily along, we turned aside into any path that appeared more inviting, or visited spots not far from our course, noted in the history of our people.

The roads were already beginning to fill with those who like ourselves were seeking Jerusalem—some from the regions of upper Galilee, from Decapolis and the parts still farther east, and some even from Damascus and the banks of the Euphrates, who, that they may at the same time perform a religious duty, and visit kinsmen or friends from whom they have separated for the advantages of a foreign residence, turn annually towards the great capital at this season of the year. With these distant travellers we often entered into conversation, giving and receiving intelligence concerning the condition of our people in all parts of the world. The great inquiry on their part was of Jesus, and whether he would probably be at the feast, and what would happen if he should be there. Having only heard reports of him

until now, their only desire seemed to be to see him, and their only apprehension lest he should not be present. Family and friends and the observance of the festival were forgotten in the thoughts, the hopes, and the fears that possessed them concerning this wonderful man. They seemed for the most part in a state of great uncertainty, not knowing what to think of him, nor hardly what to wish for or expect. Many indeed were violent enough, and desired only that so great a disturber of the public peace, and who was likely to bring down upon the whole people the wrath of Rome, thereby destroying the traffic of every sort now prosperously going on, might be summarily dealt with, and that too, ere the mischief grew to any more serious head. Others thought that any teaching and any teacher was to be welcomed even, that could redeem the Law of Moses from the practices and the perversions of the reigning sects, who made it, one set of them little better than a religion without God, or spirit, or a future; and another, a cover, by means of a plenty of dead forms, of every wicked vice and lust. We might be grateful, they thought, toward any one who should bring back a true worship, no matter for the way he took to reach his end. But there were none from the remoter parts who deemed Jesus to be the Messiah, or thought that he any more than John, was fitted for that great office. I enjoyed in the highest degree these passing glimpses of men of all forms of Jewish faith, and obtained much knowledge of the character of communities of our people, of which before I had heard little, and knew hardly of their existence.

Shammai, as I have said, was the more especial guardian of Ruth and Judith; but it many times happened

that, tempting him forward into the company of Onias and Levi, and engaging him in some dispute, I then fell back and took upon myself the more agreeable duties of his office. So full of pleasures of the highest kind, my mother, were these two days, that were I to describe them the hours must be treated as days and the moments as hours.

Upon leaving the house of Onias, we crossed the Jordan at the Ox Ford, and keeping upon the west bank of the river took the road to Jericho. Avoiding the city, we struck directly for the barren wastes and rocky defiles which conduct the traveller to Jerusalem.

You will readily believe it was with no common emotion that I found myself drawing near for the first time to so celebrated a place. The sentiments, which possessed me when I first beheld from the ocean the outlines of Lebanon, and first set my foot upon the soil of Cæsarea, were again present. As I ascended the eastern side of the Mount of Olives, passing through Bethany, and knew that upon reaching its summit or coming to its descent the long expected prospect would break upon me, I could with difficulty restrain my pace to that of Judith's mule, whose step seemed slower than ever before. But the hill was in due time surmounted, and soon as we had crossed a part of its summit, and passed from out the groves which clothe its western brow, the city, as it were in a moment of time, stood before us in its whole extent, no object whatsoever intervening to cut off the least portion of the prospect. Mount Moriah crowned with its Temple rising from the vast supporting walls that form a part of the hill on which it stands, Mount Sion with its shining palaces,

Acra and Bezetha, the heavy walls of the city girding it about, with their gate-ways and frequent towers—all lay before me a vision of greatness and beauty not surpassed by any other I had ever beheld. The vast assemblage of temple, palace, and dwelling, with the swarming populace and all the thousand signs of overflowing and active life, struck the mind the more impressively too from standing, as it all did, in the midst of surrounding hills, whose bare and rugged tops and sides gave no token of aught but sterility and death. The eye beheld nothing upon them but flocks of sheep among the grey rocks, hardly to be distinguished from the rocks themselves, and so only adding one more to the other features of desolation. Another scene was, however, presented by fertile valleys at their feet thickly inhabited, their olive orchards, and their vineyards creeping a little way up the barren hillsides. At the roots of the hill we were upon, and all along upon the banks of the Kedron, the white, pointed tents of strangers and travellers were visible, who had, like ourselves, come thus early to witness the events that should ensue, while the roads leading to the gates of the city, and crossing the plain in all directions, were filled with crowds of those who on horse and on foot or in vehicles of every various kind were arriving or departing. Clouds of dust, converted by the rays of the setting sun to a gaudy purple hue, rose and hovered over the whole scene, through which glittered the shining points of polished harness, or the steel trappings of troops of Roman horse as they shot swiftly along. We stopped and gazed ere we descended the hill, that we might enjoy awhile the beauty and magnificence that

were spread out below. To Judith and to others it was an old and familiar sight; but they looked forth upon it, and paused while they looked, not less willingly than I. But Onias soon warned us of the waning day, and that all the remaining time might be needed to make our preparations for the night. We therefore at a quick rate descended the mount, and moved toward the dwelling of Heber, where we were welcomed with patriarchal hospitality by the venerable Israelite.

That having occurred against which Onias had made good provision, our tents were soon set up on the grounds of Heber, where they overlooked both the city and the road descending from the Mount of Olives.

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The day succeeding this being the Sabbath, I resorted early to the city in company with Onias. I was filled with admiration as I drew nearer to the walls, and saw their immense height and thickness, and the strength of the gates with the defences of their vast towers, and considered that, owing to these things and to its natural position, it was a place absolutely impregnable. On this side, indeed, the city derives great advantage from the height of the ground on which it stands, in addition to that of the walls. But were there the walls alone, it seemed to me an impossible thing that they should either be surmounted by an enemy, or demolished by engines. Onias with a proud step, as he beheld my wonder, led me on to the gates, and through them into the city, pointing out as he went the buildings that were most remarkable, and the persons also whom we met, who were distinguished for their office or their power over the people. At length hastening along the streets,



now thronged with those who were pouring also in the same direction, we reached the great object of my desire, that which from my infancy I had ever wished to behold, the Temple. Truly did Herod show his magnificence in this vast and beautiful structure. If in other cities, as I have seen, he did great things and well-worthy of admiration, here he did greater still ; so that, as I judge, all that together he had built in Cæsarea would not compare with what, for grandeur, perfect workmanship, proportion, and variety of beauty, he accomplished in Jerusalem in this single building. The marble of which it is built is beautiful and polished to the smoothness of crystal, yet are the separate pieces so large that it is surprising they should have been laid in their places safely and without injury at such heights. The innumerable columns surrounding the courts of the Gentiles and the Women, and supporting the porticos which encompass the building, create unfeigned astonishment in the beholder.

All parts of it on the morning of this Sabbath I found swarming with the numbers of those who had come up, some to worship, some, like myself, strangers from remote parts to wonder and gaze, and some to converse and learn the news of those who recently arrived. The name of Jesus was heard from every one, as he passed talking with another, or as he addressed yourself. All were asking some questions concerning him of those who, they supposed, might know better than themselves, or else answering those who had made inquiries, or else loudly and fiercely disputing concerning his character, authority, and works, and the designs of the Council. In the outer courts, where the meaner sort of

people assemble, no measures were kept among those who disputed, but words often came to blows, and peace was restored only by the interference of officers of the Temple.

The question put by all to all was, "Will he come up to the feast? who can tell?" As I stood upon the upper steps of those leading to the Treasury, I was accosted by one, who said, "Sir, can you tell me if Jesus will be at the feast?" I answered that I could not, but I trusted much to the general persuasion that he would come. Though none can say that he will from any certain knowledge, yet all feel assured that he will, and there are none to say nay. Such general convictions commonly turn out well founded.

"What you say," he replied, "is true. Seeing you, however, but now in company with Onias of Beth-Hæren, I looked for more certain intelligence at your hands, as Jesus has of late been in those regions."

"He has moved so fast," I replied, "from place to place, as if hasting to complete some work that he had to do in season, that it is likely none can tell where he has been, or where he now is, save those disciples who, as I hear, never leave him."

"Some others know a little," cried a voice at my side, "as well as those of whom you speak. Two days ago he was in the Peræa, beyond Jordan—to be in the outskirts of Jericho on the Sabbath, where I doubt not he now is. And what is more, he will be in Jerusalem at the feast." So saying he turned away, and passing from place to place, repeated his news to as many as would hear. "This is news indeed," said he who had first spoken. "It will crowd the city more and more. What think you will happen?"

I said that I was a stranger in Jerusalem, and would rather learn of him.

"I am in no man's secrets," he answered, "and can tell you only what is confidently reported, and my own opinion."

"And what will happen as you think, or as is commonly believed?"

"What I think then is this, that Jesus will publicly, as it is well known he has done privately, declare himself, and the people will rise in his favor. It is all abroad among them already, that he hath of late, not obscurely as heretofore, but plainly announced himself the Christ, which has greatly stirred them; and that, together with their own belief founded on his miracles, will draw them all around him."

"But," I asked, "has he not, at the same time that he has declared himself Christ, prophesied his death by the Council?"

"That is said," he answered, "but is not believed. Besides, they say if he has uttered such a word, it can mean only that he shall die as Jesus the Nazarene, and then begin his reign and true life as the Christ. But so bent are they on having their way that, whether he will or not, they will hail him and have him King."

"If he be not really such," I said, "it will bring down upon him a great danger, and possibly his ruin. They would be more cautious perhaps, if they considered that. They surely would not desire to do him an injury."

"Certainly not; but the difficulty would be to put a new opinion into them. It cannot be done; what they want they will have and do. But while such is their

purpose, the Council are bent upon his death, and will compass it, if by force or fraud it can be done."

"They will find it, I think, a thing impossible to do, in the present temper of the populace."

"I am also clear," he replied, "that it would breed tumults not easy to be allayed. Yet they may accomplish that by craft, and secretly, which they could not do openly and in the eye of day. To give their accusations color, as if they sprung not so much from themselves as from some of the followers of Jesus who would fain do the State a service, it is rumored that one of them is found who will inform against him, and accuse him before the Council."

"That may be said," I answered, "but cannot be true; for no one thing is affirmed so constantly as this, the veneration and affection with which Jesus is regarded by those who are about him; so that one might as soon expect that Jesus should accuse himself as that one of his disciples should."

"Trust not that," rejoined my companion; "gold will bribe any virtue—at least any to be found in Jerusalem. With that the Council shall buy, mark now the issue, the bosom friend of this Nazarene, and the judgment of Pilate!"

"I had thought better," I said, "of my countrymen, if not of Pilate."

"It was because of your ignorance," he rejoined; and wishing me peace, turned away.

What I had heard from this man, who seemed to know more, and with more certainty, than he was willing to acknowledge, gave me pain. I forgot for a time where I was, and continued to pace the marble floors of

the Porticos, thinking only of the probable doom of this good man. I would willingly have moved in the cause of his deliverance, but I could see no quarter whence it could come. All the men in power, the Rulers of the Synagogues, the High Priests Annas and Caiaphas, the principal persons both among the Pharisees and Sadducees, were alike banded together against him,—and for him, only the fickle, helpless, unmanageable people, well disposed, hoping everything, but only half believing their own opinion concerning him. I could only say, God surely has been with him thus far; he must have some great purpose in thus sending him forth, and will not allow that it shall be defeated; safely and confidently then may we leave him in his hands. The darkness is too profound for us to penetrate.

Turning away, I passed from the Temple into the streets, and entering a Synagogue, passed there the hour of worship. They who preached failed not to turn away the minds of the people, by every form of statement and argument, from Jesus and his doctrines. The great considerations, here in Jerusalem seemed to be, “that he was a disturber of the peace of the city and the nation, interrupted their business, caused uproar and confusion, gave umbrage to the Romans, brought the law and its ministers into contempt, and substituted dangerous novelties in the place of ancient truth;—his miracles were shown to be the work of Devils, and the citizens were exhorted to oppose him, and all who clave to him.” Most assented to such things, but some expressed their dissatisfaction aloud, and attempted to reply by showing the opinions of those who believed in

Jesus, but the voices of too many were lifted up against them, and the service ended in noise and confusion.

Well wearied at length of the city, I sought our tent at the foot of the mount, where in the more quiet presence of Ruth, Judith, their parents, and the venerable Heber, I enjoyed a higher pleasure than before. It would have been higher still, but that so bitter is this benevolent old Jew's hostility against Jesus, that he will not permit his name to be mentioned in his presence; or, if he converses of him at all, it is with a force of passion that changes him for the time to a madman. We therefore abstained from all such topics until the evening, and the moon had risen, when we wandered forth to the Fountain of Siloam, where, seated among its rocks and shades, we discoursed of the only things that now engaged us, of Jesus, and of his doctrine, as it is alleged to be, and indulged freely our conjectures of the events of the approaching feast.

As we sat there, and as we afterwards walked returning to the house of Heber, the sound of music came to us from neighboring houses in all directions, in whose apartments, or in the grounds about them, there were companies of persons who sang hymns or songs, or danced to the playing of various instruments.

On the following day it became well known among the people, that Jesus had arrived at Bethany, and that he would with certainty be in Jerusalem at the feast. A great stir was evident among all, of every sect and rank, produced by this intelligence. Great numbers, immediately abandoning whatever might be the affairs in hand, left the city at once, and made for Bethany.

All day the crowds filled the way, coming or going. Learning from some who returned, that Jesus was indeed there at the house of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead, but that on the morrow he would come to the city, I went not, though I restrained myself with difficulty, but waited till he should himself arrive. In the meanwhile I saw and conversed with many of the inhabitants of the city. I found them sure of one thing, that Jesus was now coming into the city as the Son of David, that he would proclaim himself, and assume his proper place; they would go forth in great numbers to meet him, and receive him as it became them to do. They said that the Council were already alarmed at the signs everywhere so apparent, of devotion to Jesus, and knew not what measures to adopt to check the raging of the fever. It was evident, that they were now apprehensive, lest Jesus would prove, what he had often been affirmed to be, and they should lose their power.

I could urge nothing against their assertions, or their expectations, neither did I wish to do so. It all seemed now likely enough to happen as they were so confidently predicting. Who at least can do otherwise than yield before the strong persuasions of an immense multitude? Whatever sentiment universally seizes and pervades them, it is difficult to believe will not be realized. Such consent, among so many, affects the mind, whether it will or not, with the force of truth.

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Another day has come and gone—Jesus has entered the city—I have seen him.

Early in the morning it became apparent, that that would take place which had been looked for. For so

soon as the gates were open, the people began to pour forth, and throng the road leading by the House of Heber and over the Mount of Olives to Bethany. As the day advanced, the crowds increased of persons of all sorts and conditions, the old as well as the young, the rich and poor, women and little children. It seemed as if the whole city had come abroad to honor by its presence and welcome, at least witness, the entrance of one who was either to reign over it as King, or else, it might be, fall a sacrifice to the rage of the present rulers. If one might judge by the countenance, but especially by the language which continually fell upon the ear, they who had thus come abroad and come in the spirit of friendship, and with the intention to show that if Jesus would meet them in their wishes, they on the other hand would acknowledge and receive him. As these crowds passed by our tent, loud and ardent in their talk, their lively gesticulations, as well as their voices, showing what hopes and passions were ruling within, it was in vain that I longer tried to resist the contagion, but leaving Judith and Ruth at the tent door, threw myself into the midst of the living mass, and was borne along with it up the Mount, and on toward Bethphage and Bethany. When we had reached the brow of the hill and were about passing it, the sound of voices as of a great number caught our ears, and looking forward we beheld where, as the road suddenly turned, Jesus, surrounded by another multitude, came on toward us. The air was now filled with the exulting cries of the approaching throng, which, caught up by us and those who were behind, rolled on an increasing shout even to the gates of the city, announcing to those who covered the walls and



the towers, that Jesus was drawing nigh. Never were a people, I believe, so carried away by what cannot be termed other than a sacred zeal. No language was too lofty and confident for them to utter, no acts of homage too expressive to render of their loyalty and devotion. The way was all along strewn with the leaves and branches of trees, which the eager populace tore from the groves that bordered the road; branches of the Palm were waved over their heads and ever, as Jesus slowly moved on, often wholly obstructed by the struggling crowds, they who were immediately about him cast their garments in the way as before a king. Many, especially such as had at any time received benefits of healing at his hands, or whose friends had been restored by his power, cast themselves down prostrate on the ground, as the only sufficient sign they could offer of their reverence and gratitude. I cannot well describe my sensations as Jesus drew nigh, so that I could with distinctness observe his countenance and form, but they were such as I never before experienced in the presence of a mortal; and it could not well be otherwise, as I doubted not that I looked upon one within whom were lodged the very power and wisdom of Jehovah. Awe and dread were therefore the feelings that would have alone prevailed, were it not that, however wonderfully I felt he was united to God, I saw that the language of his countenance was not that of an angel, nor of a God, but of a man, bound like myself, by the closest ties to every one of the multitudes who thronged him. Its expression was mild and pitiful; but at the same time of one who, if full of regard and compassion for each and for all, also possessed the energies and the will to

do for those whom he loved whatsoever should be needful for their advantage or redemption. Strength and power were lodged in the lines and forms of the face, not any less than benevolence, giving ample assurance that there were inward forces of intellect and will, equal to every work that might be given him to do. His was therefore the aspect of a person who—and this was what I had gathered also from the observation of Onias—was to be loved and yet feared also. He seemed buried in thought for the most part as he rode along, save that now and then he briefly responded to the cries or the questions of those who pressed about him. But he spake not many words, or so that more than a few could hear, until we were come to the descent of the Mount of Olives, and the city suddenly came into view in all its glory—its walls, and towers, and house-tops covered with her thronging inhabitants. He then paused; and beholding with both astonishment and pity, as it seemed, the scene before him, tears fell from his eyes; and though I could not hear with distinctness all that he said, he appeared to express apprehensions of great evil and disaster as about to overtake Jerusalem and Judea, of enemies who should assail and oppress them, and lay them waste. All who heard were struck with amazement, and one to another uttered in secret tones their astonishment. Thus while the innumerable multitude of those who encompassed him, and hailed him King and Deliverer, and could find no words of joy in which to give vent to the hopes that were within, he rejoiced not, but was evidently sad. The sight of the city with its populace all awaiting him and the sounds of their tumultuous cries as they were borne to us from afar, and the

waving of their hands in token of welcome, seemed to awaken no feeling of triumph in his heart, but, instead, drew forth tears. I confess that I was also astonished; and could only say, the whole of this man is mysterious and impenetrable—we know him not—we do not comprehend what he is, nor what he has come to do.

Thus we moved on—but hardly moving by reason of the constantly increasing throngs of people—to the sublime music of the acclamations, which without ceasing filled the air. As we came against the house of Heber, our humble tents I beheld swept away and trampled into the earth by the descending torrent, which swelling beyond the limits of the road, spread far into the grounds on either side. No other end seemed to be regarded by those who composed these crowds, than, if possible, to keep within sight of the object of their worship or the hearing of his voice; and but that a Divine Providence seemed to protect the people, great numbers would have perished, trodden into the earth by those who rushed madly on, forgetful in their struggles for precedence, of the feeble and the young who filled their way.

The day was already well declined when we reached the gates of the city, and when we had arrived at the Temple it had drawn on towards evening; when, therefore, after entering it Jesus had again, as once before, purged it of those who by their wicked practices violated its sanctity, and the people had received assurance that he would come again on the morrow, he returned to Bethany, where at the house of Lazarus he had taken up his abode.

Defiled with dust, and spent by the fatigue of what I had done and borne and witnessed, I returned gladly to the

dwelling of Heber, where I found the repose I needed. Our demolished tents had already been set up again by the servants of the household, and our scattered effects gathered together in their places.

After the hour of supper was over, we sat long at the tent door, speaking of the events of the day that had ended. Onias was gloomy and thoughtful. Although he would make no concessions of former opinions, it was evident that he had seen cause for hesitation, in the heartiness of the reception which the capital, as if possessed of one mind, had given to the new prophet. No event could be strange or unlikely after that. Judith was full of confidence, and could with difficulty lay so much restraint on the expressions of it, as regard for her father taught her to impose. She was certain that now every hope would be speedily fulfilled. The people by a common impulse were eager to receive Jesus; and who could now doubt that he was the Saviour whom God had provided? Nothing was impossible to him, armed as he now was with the power of God and the consent of the people. Onias heard all she advanced with patience more than usual, and only said that there was still too much of what was dark and unintelligible in the character of Jesus, and uncertain in his purposes, for any undoubting reliance to be placed either in him, or in those who thronged him so—seeing that they could hardly pretend to comprehend a person, who to the most learned and penetrating was a mystery. “Still new cause of astonishment,” continued Onias, “has he to-day offered to those most inclined towards him, by language which he used as he first came in sight of the city, on the Mount of Olives. It is variously reported, but most

say that he lifted up a prophecy against Jerusalem, that he declared her destruction as approaching, that the very walls of her defence should be overthrown and torn up from their foundation. What can we make of this? It surely seems not much like the language of the great Restorer—the Repairer of breaches! Had such things come to the ears of that whole shouting multitude, it needs no gift of a divine discernment to know that their shouts would suddenly have fallen, and sounds of a different kind, or silence, taken their place. Heard you aught of that, Julian?”

I answered, that I had heard of it, and what was yet more I had myself heard most of the words he had spoken. They were as he had reported them, and in the minds of all who heard them had created such astonishment as he might suppose. . “But,” I added, “I doubt not, it is all by this time forgotten, or remembered only as one of those dark sayings, many of which are reported even by the disciples of Jesus, to fall from him in his discourses.”

“By some,” replied Onias, “the saying is not forgotten, but was treasured up as what it behoved the people to know, and hath since been carefully spread abroad. Wherever it has gone, I warrant you, it has done little to deepen the place of the prophet in the hearts of those who love the honor and safety of Jerusalem. That he should be the Christ we look for, who prophesies ruin and disaster to Israel, few will be inclined to believe.”

“It will take more,” I said, “than a single dark saying variously reported, and which may be interpreted many ways, to shake him from the seat he now holds. The people are with him. He needs at this moment, as

I judge, but to speak the word, and Antonia, the gates, the walls, and the Roman camp, nay, Jerusalem itself, are all his—and ere the news could reach Italy, Judea also, and Israel from Dan to Beersheba !”

Judith said nothing as I uttered these things, but her countenance revealed, quite as well as any words could have done, the emotions of joy and hope, and of gratitude to me, that filled her.

“Thou art more of Judith’s mind than I had believed,” said Onias scornfully; “this momentary triumph of Jesus too much sways thee.”

I said, I had intended to add what would have shown that, notwithstanding the astonishing spectacle of to-day, I was still, in regard to my opinion of Jesus, what I had been. Though he at this moment, as I could not but think, truly possessed all the power I had given to him, I did not believe he would use it in the way I had hinted, though I confessed I hardly knew what to think or believe. It appeared to me that his whole character and aim were distinct from, or rather entirely opposed to, what belonged to the Christ. Jesus is a prophet only.

\* \* \* \* \*

The people of Jerusalem are, each day that they have listened to Jesus in the temple, becoming more and more devoted to him. Although the Council are as resolved as ever upon his destruction, and by their agents and spies, contrive to throw obstacles in his way, and do what they can to stir up the passions of the multitude against him, they meet with little success. The people gather around him, and listen to his instructions; and going away, they lose all the enmity they had entertained against him in the softening influences of his word. They

doubt not that he is indeed a great Prophet of God ; and they still hope, and while he lives, will hope, that he will declare himself the Christ by the signs they look for. Their honest devotion keeps in awe the Rulers and Priests.

\* \* \* \* \*

Fuller and more exact accounts, my mother, than I have now given of the discourses of Jesus during these few days, shall you ere long receive from the records of Judith, who hears no word—and she has heard all—that she writes not down.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was on the second day before the Sabbath that, leaving the Temple, where I had been listening to the discourses of Jesus I was accosted by a familiar voice, and turning I beheld the Greek Zeno. While listening to Jesus, I had observed the presence of Zadok and Saturninus, but I had not caught the countenance of the friendly Greek. I greeted him, as you will suppose, with pleasure. He said that he had been two days in Jerusalem, having come up with others, among whom were Philæus and Lysias, with the purpose to see the wonderful Man of Nazareth. I expressed my surprise that he had never sought him before, seeing that his desire of knowledge caused him usually to seek it at every source. At every source, he quickly rejoined, within the limits of Cæsarea. He was strictly a citizen of that city, and rarely strayed from its limits; and nothing less than a desire to see a man, who seemed rather to be a God descended upon earth than an ordinary mortal, would have brought him so far, except also the circumstance that some Jews, proselytes from his people, ac-

accompanied him, through whom he was in hopes to see and converse with Jesus. I asked him if he had succeeded in obtaining access to him. He said that he had; and that it was while he and his companions were still conversing with him, that the voice had been heard in the Temple which yesterday had filled all who were present with astonishment and dread, and startled the city itself. He needed no other evidence, he said, for himself, to be persuaded that Jesus was a messenger from Heaven. That voice was of no mortal tone—it was the voice of an angel, or of a God, bearing testimony to Jesus. They who hearing could resist it, would resist God himself, though he appeared in his own form. “I am no Jew,” said Zeno, “but I am a believer in the Supreme God, and in the power of the senses to discern one thing from another, and form a just judgment; and as certain as I am that I, Zeno of Cæsarea, was there in the Temple of Jerusalem, and in the presence of Jesus, so certain am I that the voice was the voice of a God, and not of a man; and so I am sure thought, in their hearts, all who were there. My companions failed to compass the object for which they desired an interview with Jesus,—relating, as I understood, to the government in Judea they believed him to be about to establish, and the place or employment they might obtain for themselves under it—but they received convictions strong as my own, that he whom their conversation proved, as they judged, not to be the Messiah, was amply shown to be a messenger of God. That he was not the person they took him for, they thought to be certain from the language which he used, when he understood their aim, which astonished them



out of measure, for he told them that no such favors as they were thinking of could ever flow from him; but his empire was of a very different kind; it could be founded only on his death—as a seed sown in the ground could bear fruit only by in a manner first dying, so the good fruits which he as Christ came to bestow upon men, would flow only from his death; he was to be exalted by first suffering and dying, and it must be so with all who came and attached themselves to his cause; they would be the ministers of great benefit to Israel and mankind, but it would be not by reigning as princes in Israel, but by doing and also suffering in the same manner as he had done; and much more to the same purpose which they seemed to comprehend very little. Of one thing, however, they left him fully assured, that he was not the peculiar kind of person or Prophet whom they and the nation expect—that he had no pretensions to that character, but was at the same time, beyond a doubt, a great and wonderful person highly favored of God, and if he should be permitted by the Priests to fulfil his mission would confer great benefits on Israel. Their fear was, however, from all they could learn, that the Council was bent on his destruction, and would succeed sooner or later in their aim. “Such was our interview,” continued Zeno, “with Jesus. I am truly glad to have seen and heard him; for no other is like him, either in the form, the countenance, the voice, or the divine wisdom that flows from him as he speaks. I felt compassion for him, Julian, notwithstanding his wonderful power; for he seemed as one who in the beginning of life is oppressed with presentiments of evil which it was impossible for him to escape.”

When Zeno had thus spoken, and we were still walking in the streets of the city, I desired him to accompany me to the dwelling of Heber, which he readily consented to do. There we found all our friends; and with them Saturninus, who escapes, even for a moment, with difficulty from the duties which now press upon him. Because Heber, who is of the Sadducees, with his household celebrates the Passover on this evening, they were not with us, as at this hour of the day they have commonly been. The preparations of Onias are making for the evening of the morrow.

When supper was ended we sat again at the tent door, where we conversed together not long, for a spirit of heaviness was upon us which we did not succeed in shaking off, and so caused us early to separate. But when Judith had spoken of the triumph which Jesus had thus obtained over the Council through the universal homage of the people, and of the prospect which thus was held out of his continuing to teach the people even though he should never fill any other office, Saturninus said that for his part he could not but be under apprehensions for the safety of Jesus even yet. He had observed great activity among those whom he knew to be emissaries of the Priests, and had noted that Zadok especially, as he had met and spoken with him, wore upon his countenance an expression that signified a malignant satisfaction with some purpose or plan, whatever it might be, that was employing his thoughts. He had also received from Pilate orders to be vigilant beyond the usual measure, as if tumult was looked for. Yet his suspicions might be unreasonable and have grown

out of his concern for the welfare of an innocent and righteous man.

Onias thought it would by no means be wonderful, if a new exasperation existed in the minds of many who had heard him to-day, seeing what the prophecies were which he had uttered.

"But," said I, "if he prophesied destruction to the Temple and to Jerusalem, he did not spare himself, since he spoke plainly of his own death by violence."

"Yet," said Judith, "of his rising from the dead also!"

"Yes," said Onias, "he boasts that being dead he will in three days come back again to life. But how plain, if he possesses any such power as could accomplish that, he would first exert it to save himself from the pain of dying! Who would die had he power to deliver himself? And at the last moment, to elude or escape from the hands of the Council or Pilate, would display his divine strength even as coming again from the dead. All this shows real weakness, and imposture."

"Unless," said Judith, "it should be true that certain ends could be accomplished by his death and immediate resurrection, which could not be otherwise, which is conceivable though we may not be able to say what they are.—But of these things it surely is not needful to dispute, for notwithstanding all you have said, Saturninus, I cannot believe in danger to one who stands so firmly in the present reverence, and just expectations of the people. The Council would never dare to injure him—for they would fear the people. I will apprehend, I can apprehend nothing. During the few more days

we remain here, shall I look to gather new wisdom from his lips, and long do I hope and believe that Israel will rejoice in the light of his truth and life."

We agreed in dismissing our fears. We also determined that on the morrow we would be together in the temple at the time Jesus should arrive from Bethany, which is ever about the third hour.

Our friends then took their departure for the city, while for ourselves we were soon wrapt in sleep.

But while we slept in security and peace—injustice and violence, treachery and revenge were awake, and under cover of night doing their deeds darker than night.

His enemies have triumphed, and Jesus hangs crucified upon mount Calvary !

Thus it fell out. During the night, while friends were away, the city asleep, none suspecting the designs of the Council, Jesus was seized, carried before the Council, tried and condemned, the sentence confirmed by Pilate, and then before the third hour of the day, and before the knowledge of what had been done could spread abroad, was hurried without the walls and crucified. Grief and indignation are in every heart ; for, save the Priesthood and the Council, there were but few, who, though they believed not in Jesus, did not reverence his virtues and hope that he might show himself more and greater than his miracles had yet proved him. But though angry and disappointed, they raise no tumult, seeing that although, as they judged but yester-

day, there was hope in Jesus, and they knew not what he might not be,—felt that he might be anything, everything they wished,—the event has resolved all their doubts, as it has finally and forever extinguished all their hopes. They grieve that being innocent he should suffer death to feed the hatred of the Rulers, but they acquiesce without further complaint, as they now know that their trust in him was delusive—that he himself was deceived concerning his own character and office, and that they therefore had been placing their reliance on one in whom there was no help.

Judith is overwhelmed with grief.—She can hardly believe that he, who but yesterday was borne into the city on the arms of a whole people, should so soon have suffered a cruel and shameful death, crowds of that very people looking on, and uttering approving cries. I assured her that they who witnessed the trial—who even knew of it—were very few, and they for the most part partisans brought together by the Rulers. When he was carried forth indeed to the Judgment Hall of Pilate, and was sent by him, out of a feigned respect, to Herod, great numbers of the populace were gathered together; but it was not wonderful, as they beheld him wholly in the power of his enemies, submitting to his fate as if he no longer possessed any power of resistance or escape, that they should abandon him, as one who by such helplessness was shown not to be the person they had taken him for; especially seeing that his own disciples lost their faith in him, and left him to his fate; and that one of them bribed by the Council—that thereby the rage of the people might be diverted in part at least from themselves—accused him before them, and betrayed to

their officers the place of his retreat on the Mount of Olives. All were now alike persuaded—his own disciples not less than others—that they had been strangely deceived.

No sooner had Judith learned this mournful termination of her hopes, than she resolved immediately to return to Beth-Harem, nor did Onias, seeing her unhappiness, seek to detain her; but committing her, accompanied by Ruth who shared her sorrow, to my guidance, set us forward with the requisite attendants on our way, so that on this same morning we crossed Mount Olivet, and journeyed rapidly homewards.

As we wound along among the valleys of the Jordan—\* \* \* \* \*

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Here, my kinsmen of Rome, do these letters to Naomi abruptly terminate.

Of the early days passed in Judea they give an exact and careful account; it was with this I promised to supply you. Of the fortunes and the fate of Onias when, upon the crucifixion of Jesus and at the instigation of Herod—now relieved of his most formidable foe and rival, whose death he celebrated on the day of his

crucifixion by a banquet given to his friends—he resumed the enterprises that had been interrupted since the first appearing of John, of my own fortunes during the same period, of the part I took in the defence of the city when beleaguered and finally destroyed by the Romans, and the scenes I then witnessed, of my intercourse with the early Christians, and the strange interpretation they came to put upon the character, and doctrine of Jesus, and their controversies with the Jews who, like myself, continued to deny him, I will also write, if concerning these things you should show the same desire to be informed.

It is not necessary that I should say aught of the wonderful events that took place in Jerusalem, surpassing all preceding wonders, on that same day that we departed from it, since the writings of the followers of Jesus in which they are truly recorded, have already become common. All that I shall add is this, that those wonders were witnessed by persons from all parts of the world, and received the same ready assent as the miracles of Jesus. Saturninus the Centurion—and than he no man could have looked on with a calmer mind—doubted not that Jesus was a prophet of God, declared more especially to be so by the signs of anger or of compassion which nature gave, when they whom he came to serve and bless devoted him to the death of the cross. His rising from the dead also, in agreement with his prediction, a prediction which when it was uttered few understood or afterwards remembered, confirmed, not only by the testimony of his own disciples who saw him and conversed with him a long time after he came to life, but also by the soldiers who were set

as a watch over the sepulchre, he considered as establishing the same thing. Doubtless they sufficiently proved him to be a messenger and prophet of God, at the same time that they failed to prove him the Messiah who had been foretold, for whom Israel had waited so long, and still waits.

THE END.



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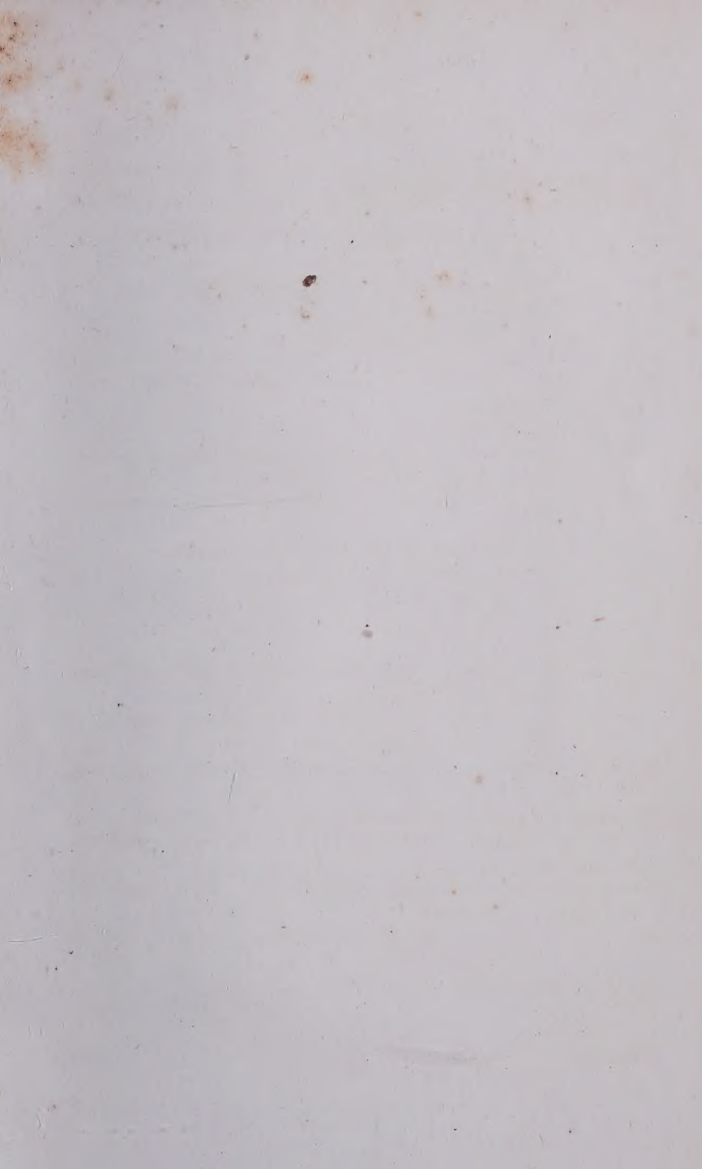
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